

# **TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE**

**AS TOLD BY HUCK FINN**

**AND OTHER TALES**

**BY**

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# CONTENTS

	PAGE
TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE . . . . .	I
THE CALIFORNIAN'S TALE . . . . .	123
ADAM'S DIARY . . . . .	141
HOW TO TELL A STORY . . . . .	161
MENTAL TELEGRAPHY AGAIN . . . . .	175
WHAT PAUL BOURGET THINKS OF US . . . . .	191
A LITTLE NOTE TO M. PAUL BOURGET . . . . .	205





## **TOM SAWYER DETECTIVE**



# TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

AS TOLD BY HUCK FINN

## CHAPTER I

WELL, it was the next spring after me and Tom Sawyer set our old nigger Jim free, the time he was chained up for a runaway slave down there on Tom's Uncle Silas's farm in Arkansaw. The frost was working out of the ground, and out of the air too, and it was getting closer and closer onto barefoot time every day; and next it would be marble time, and next mumblety-peg, and next tops and hoops, and next kites, and then right away it would be summer and going in a-swimming. It just makes a boy homesick to look ahead like that and see how far off summer is. Yes, and it sets him to sighing and saddening around, and there's something the matter with him, he don't know what. But anyway, he gets out by himself and mopes and

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

thinks ; and mostly he hunts for a lonesome place high up on the hill in the edge of the woods, and sets there and looks away off on the big Mississippi down there a-reaching miles and miles around the points where the timber looks smoky and dim it's so far off and still, and everything's so solemn it seems like everybody you've loved is dead and gone, and you 'most wish you was dead and gone too, and done with it all.

Don't you know what that is? It's spring fever. That is what the name of it is. And when you've got it, you want—oh, you don't quite know what it is you do want, but it just fairly makes your heart ache, you want it so ! It seems to you that mainly what you want is to get away ; get away from the same old tedious things you're so used to seeing and so tired of, and see something new. That is the idea ; you want to go and be a wanderer ; you want to go wandering far away to strange countries where everything is mysterious and wonderful and romantic. And if you can't do that, you'll put up with considerable less ; you'll go anywhere you ~~can~~ go, just so as to get away, and ~~be~~ thankful of the chance too.

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

Well, me and Tom Sawyer had the spring-fever, and had it bad, too ; but it warn't any use to think about Tom trying to get away, because, as he said, his Aunt Polly wouldn't let him quit school and go traipsing off somers wasting time ; so we was pretty blue. We was setting on the front steps one day about sundown talking this way, when out comes his Aunt Polly with a letter in her hand and says—

‘Tom, I reckon you’ve got to pack up and go down to Arkansaw—your Aunt Sally wants you.’

I ’most jumped out of my skin for joy. I reckoned Tom would fly at his aunt and hug her head off : but if you believe me he set there like a rock, and never said a word. It made me fit to cry to see him act so foolish, with such a noble chance as this opening up. Why, we might lose it if he didn't speak up and show he was thankful and grateful. But he set there and studied and studied till I was that distressed I didn't know what to do ; then he says, very ca'm, and I could a shot him for it :

‘Well,’ he says, ‘I’m right down sorry, Aunt Polly, but I reckon I got to be excused—for the present.’

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

His Aunt Polly was knocked so stupid and so mad at the cold impudence of it that she couldn't say a word for as much as a half a minute, and this give me a chance to nudge Tom and whisper :

'Ain't you got any sense ? Sp'iling such a noble chance as this and throwing it away ?'

But he warn't disturbed. He mumbled back :

'Huck Finn, do you want me to let her *see* how bad I want to go ? Why, she'd begin to doubt, right away, and imagine a lot of sicknesses and dangers and objections, and first you know she'd take it all back. You lemme alone ; I reckon I know how to work her.'

Now I never would a thought of that. But he was right. Tom Sawyer was always right—the levellest head I ever see, and always *at* himself and ready for anything you might spring on him. By this time his Aunt Polly was all straight again, and she let fly. She says :

'You'll be excused ! *You* will ! Well, I never heard the like of it in all my days ! The idea of you talking like that to *me* ! Now take yourself off and pack your traps ; and if I

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

hear another word out of you about what you'll be excused from and what you won't, I lay *I'll* excuse you—with a hickory!

She hit his head a thump with her thimble as we dodged by, and he let on to be whimpering as we struck for the stairs. Up in his room he hugged me, he was so out of his head for gladness because he was going travelling. And he says:

'Before we get away she'll wish she hadn't let me go, but she won't know any way to get around it now. After what she's said, her pride won't let her take it back.'

Tom was packed in ten minutes, all except what his aunt and Mary would finish up for him; then we waited ten more for her to get cooled down and sweet and gentle again; for Tom said it took her ten minutes to unruffle in times when half of her feathers was up, but twenty when they was all up, and this was one of the times when they was all up. Then we went down, being in a sweat to know what the letter said.

She was setting there in a brown study, with it laying in her lap. We set down, and she says:

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

They're in considerable trouble down there, and they think you and Huck'll be a kind of a diversion for them—"comfort," they say. Much of that they'll get out of you and Huck Finn, I reckon. There's a neighbour named Brace Dunlap that's been wanting to marry their Benny for three months, and at last they told him pine blank and once for all, he *couldn't*; so he has soured on them, and they're worried about it. I reckon he's somebody they think they'd better be on the good side of, for they've tried to please him by hiring his no-account brother to help on the farm when they can't hardly afford it, and don't want him around anyhow. Who are the Dunlaps?'

'They live about a mile from Uncle Silas's place, Aunt Polly—all the farmers live about a mile apart down there—and Brace Dunlap is a long sight richer than any of the others, and owns a whole grist of niggers. He's a widower, thirty-six years old, without any children, and is proud of his money, and overbearing, and everybody is a little afraid of him. I judge he thought he could have any girl he wanted, just for the asking, and it must have set him back a good deal when he found he couldn't get Benny.



## **TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE**

Why, Benny's only half as old as he is, and just as sweet and lovely as—well, you've seen her. Poor old Uncle Silas—why, it's pitiful, him trying to curry favour that way—so hard pushed and poor, and yet hiring that useless Jubiter Dunlap to please his ornery brother.'

'What a name—Jubiter! Where'd he get it?'

'It's only just a nickname. I reckon they've forgot his real name long before this. He's twenty-seven, now, and has had it ever since the first time he ever went in swimming. The school-teacher seen a round brown mole the size of a dime on his left leg above his knee, and four little bits of moles around it, when he was naked, and he said it minded him of Jubiter and his moons; and the children thought it was funny, and so they got to calling him Jubiter, and he's Jubiter yet. He's tall, and lazy, and sly, and sneaky, and ruther cowardly, too, but kind of good-natured, and wears long brown hair and no beard, and hasn't got a cent, and Brace boards him for nothing, and gives him his old clothes to wear, and despises him. Jubiter is a twin.'

'What's t'other twin like?'

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

'Just exactly like Jubiter—so they say; used to was, anyway, but he hain't been seen for seven years. He got to robbing when he was nineteen or twenty, and they jailed him; but he broke jail and got away—up North here, somers. They used to hear about him robbing and burglarizing now and then, but that was years ago. He's dead, now. At least that's what they say. They don't hear about him any more.'

'What was his name?'

'Jake.'

There wasn't anything more said for a considerable while; the old lady was thinking. At last she says:

'The thing that is mostly worrying your Aunt Sally is the tempers that that man Jubiter gets your uncle into.'

Tom was astonished, and so was I. Tom says:

'Tempers? Uncle Silas? Land, you must be joking! I didn't know he *had* any temper.'

'Works him up into perfect rages, your Aunt Sally says; says he acts as if he would really hit the man, sometimes.'

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

‘Aunt Polly, it beats anything I ever heard of. Why, he’s just as gentle as mush.’

‘Well, she’s worried, anyway. Says your Uncle Silas is like a changed man, on account of all this quarrelling. And the neighbours talk about it, and lay all the blame on your uncle, of course, because he’s a preacher and hain’t got any business to quarrel. Your Aunt Sally says he hates to go into the pulpit he’s so ashamed; and the people have begun to cool towards him, and he ain’t as popular now as he used to was.’

‘Well, ain’t it strange? Why, Aunt Polly, he was always so good and kind and moony and absent-minded and chuckle-headed and lovable—why, he was just an angel! What *can* be the matter of him, do you reckon?’

# **TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE**

## **CHAPTER II**

**WE** had powerful good luck ; because we got a chance in a stern-wheeler from away North which was bound for one of them bayous or one-horse rivers away down Louisiana way, and so we could go all the way down the Upper Mississippi and all the way down the Lower Mississippi to that farm in Arkansaw without having to change steamboats at St. Louis : not so very much short of a thousand miles at one pull.

A pretty lonesome boat ; there warn't but few passengers, and all old folks, that set around, wide apart, dozing, and was very quiet. We was four days getting out of the 'upper river,' because we got aground so much. But it warn't dull—couldn't be for boys that was travelling, of course.

From the very start me and Tom allowed that there was somebody sick in the state-room next to ourn, because the meals was always toted

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

in there by the waiters. By-and-by we asked about it—Tom did—and the waiter said it was a man, but he didn't look sick.

‘Well, but *ain't* he sick?’

‘I don't know; maybe he is, but 'pears to me he's just letting on.’

‘What makes you think that?’

‘Because if he was sick he would pull his clothes off *some* time or other—don't you reckon he would? Well, this one don't. At least he don't ever pull off his boots, anyway.’

‘The mischief he don't! Not even when he goes to bed?’

‘No.’

It was always nuts for Tom Sawyer—a mystery was. If you'd lay out a mystery and a pie before me and him, you wouldn't have to say take your choice; it was a thing that would regulate itself. Because in my nature I have always run to pie, whilst in his nature he has always run to mystery. People are made different. And it is the best way. Tom says to the waiter:

‘What's the man's name?’

‘Phillips.’

‘Where'd he come aboard?’

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

‘I think he got aboard at Elexandria, up on the Iowa line.’

‘What do you reckon he’s a-playing?’

‘I hain’t any notion—I never thought of it.’

I says to myself, here’s another one that runs to pie.

‘Anything peculiar about him?—the way he acts or talks?’

‘No—nothing, except he seems so scary, and keeps his doors locked night and day both, and when you knock he won’t let you in till he opens the door a crack and sees who it is.’

‘By jimminy, it’s int’resting! I’d, like to get a look at him. Say—the next time you’re going in there, don’t you reckon you could spread the door and——’

‘No, indeedy! He’s always behind it. He would block that game.’

Tom studied over it, and then he says:

‘Looky-here. You lend me your apern and let me take him his breakfast in the morning. I’ll give you a quarter.’

The boy was plenty willing enough, if the head-steward wouldn’t mind. Tom says that’s all right, he reckoned he could fix it with ‘the head-steward; and he done it. He fixed it so

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

as we could both go in with aperns on and toting vittles.

He didn't sleep much, he was in such a sweat to get in there and find out the mystery about Phillips ; and moreover he done a lot of guessing about it all night, which warn't no use, for if you are going to find out the facts of a thing, what's the sense in guessing out what ain't the facts and wasting ammunition? I didn't lose no sleep. I wouldn't give a dern to know what's the matter of Phillips, I says to myself.

Well, in the morning we put on the aperns and got a couple of trays of truck, and Tom he knocked on the door. The man opened it a crack, and then he let us in and shut it quick. By Jackson, when we got a sight of him, we most dropped the trays ! and Tom says :

'Why, Jubiter Dunlap, where'd *you* come from ?'

Well, the man was astonished, of course ; and first off he looked like he didn't know whether to be scared, or glad, or both, or which, but finally he settled down to being glad ; and then his colour come back, though at first his face had turned pretty white. So we got to

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

talking together while he et his breakfast. And he says :

‘ But I ain’t Jubiter Dunlap. I’d just as soon tell you who I am, though, if you’ll swear to keep mum, for I ain’t no Phillips, either.’

Tom says :

‘ We’ll keep mum, but there ain’t any need to tell who you are if you ain’t Jubiter Dunlap.’

‘ Why ?’

‘ Because if you ain’t him you’re t’other twin, Jake. You’re the spit’n image of Jubiter.’

‘ Well, I *am* Jake. But looky-here, how do you come to know us Dunlaps ?’

Tom told about the adventures we’d had down there at his Uncle Silas’s last summer, and when he see that there warn’t anything about his folks—or him either, for that matter—that we didn’t know, he opened out and talked perfectly free and candid. He never made any bones about his own case ; said he’d been a hard lot, was a hard lot yet, and reckoned he’d *be* a hard lot plumb to the end. He said of course it was a dangerous life, and——

He give a kind of gasp, and set his head



## **TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE**

like a person that's listening. We didn't say anything, and so it was very still for a second or so, and there warn't no sounds but the screaming of the wood-work and the chug-chugging of the machinery down below.

Then we got him comfortable again, telling him about his people, and how Brace's wife had been dead three years, and Brace wanted to marry Benny and she shook him, and Jubiter was working for Uncle Silas, and him and Uncle Silas quarrelling all the time—and then he let go and laughed.

'Land!' he says, 'it's like old times to hear all this tittle-tattle, and does me good. It's been seven years and more since I heard any. How do they talk about me these days?'

'Who?'

'The farmers—and the family.'

'Why, they don't talk about you at all—at least only just a mention, once in a long time.'

'The nation!' he says, surprised; 'why is that?'

'Because they think you are dead long ago.'

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

‘No! Are you speaking true?—honour bright, now?’ He jumped up, excited.

‘Honour bright. There ain’t anybody thinks you are alive.’

‘Then I’m saved, I’m saved, sure! I’ll go home. They’ll hide me and save my life. You keep mum. Swear you’ll keep mum—swear you’ll never, never tell on me. Oh, boys, be good to a poor devil that’s being hunted day and night, and dasn’t show his face! I’ve never done you any harm; I’ll never do you any, as God is in the heavens; swear you’ll be good to me and help me save my life.’

We’d a swore it if he’d been a dog; and so we done it. Well, he couldn’t love us enough for it or be grateful enough, poor cuss; it was all he could do to keep from hugging us.

We talked along, and he got out a little hand-bag and begun to open it, and told us to turn our backs. We done it, and when he told us to turn again he was perfectly different to what he was before. He had on blue goggles and the naturalest-looking long brown whiskers and mustashes you ever see. His own mother wouldn’t a knowed him. He asked us if he looked like his brother Jubiter, now.

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

'No,' Tom said ; 'there ain't anything left that's like him except the long hair.'

'All right, I'll get that cropped close to my head before I get there ; then him and ~~Brace~~ will keep my secret, and I'll live with them as being a stranger, and the neighbours won't ever guess me out. What do you think ?'

Tom he studied awhile, then he says :

'Well, of course me and Huck are going to keep mum there, but if you don't keep mum yourself there's going to be a little bit of a risk—it ain't much, maybe, but it's a little. I mean, if you talk, won't people notice that your voice is just like Jubiter's ; and mightn't it make them think of the twin they reckoned was dead, but maybe after all was hid all this time under another name ?'

'By George,' he says, 'you're a sharp one ! You're perfectly right. I've got to play deaf and dumb when there's a neighbour around. If I'd a struck for home and forgot that little detail—— However, I wasn't striking for home. I was breaking for any place where I could get away from these fellows that are after me ; then I was going to put on this disguise and get some different clothes, and——'

## **TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE**

He jumped for the outside door and laid his ear against it and listened, pale and kind of panting. Presently he whispers :

‘Sounded like cocking a gun! Lord, what a life to lead!’

Then he sunk down in a chair all limp and sick like, and wiped the sweat off of his face.

# TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

## CHAPTER III

FROM that time out, we was with him 'most all the time, and one or t'other of us slept in his upper berth. He said he had been so lonesome, and it was such a comfort to him to have company, and somebody to talk to in his troubles. We was in a sweat to find out what his secret was, but Tom said the best way was not to seem anxious, then likely he would drop into it himself in one of his talks, but if we got to asking questions he would get suspicious and shet up his shell. It turned out just so. It warn't no trouble to see that he *wanted* to talk about it, but always along at first he would scare away from it when he got on the very edge of it, and go to talking about something else. The way it come about was this: He got to asking us, kind of indifferent like, about the passengers down on deck. We told him about them. But he warn't satisfied; we warn't particular enough. He told us to

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

describe them better. Tom done it. At last, when Tom was describing one of the roughest and raggedest ones, he give a shiver and a gasp and says :

‘Oh, lordy, that’s one of them ! They’re aboard sure—I just knowed it. I sort of hoped I had got away, but I never believed it. Go on.’

Presently when Tom was describing another mangy rough deck passenger, he give that shiver again and says—

‘That’s him !—that’s the other one. If it would only come a good black stormy night and I could get ashore ; you see, they’ve got spies on me. They’ve got a right to come up and buy drinks at the bar yonder forrard, and they take that chance to bribe somebody to keep watch on me—porter or boots or somebody. If I was to slip ashore without anybody seeing me, they would know it inside of an hour.’

So then he got to wandering along, and pretty soon, sure enough, he was telling ! He was poking along through his ups and downs, and when he come to that place he went right along. He says :

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

'It was a confidence game. We played it on a julery-shop in St. Louis. What we was after was a couple of noble big di'monds as big as hazelnuts, which everybody was running to see. We was dressed up fine, and we played it on them in broad daylight. We ordered the di'monds sent to the hotel for us to see if we wanted to buy, and when we was examining them we had paste counterfeits all ready, and *them* was the things that went back to the shop when we said the water wasn't quite fine enough for twelve thousand dollars.'

'Twelve—thousand—dollars!' Tom says. 'Was they really worth all that money, do you reckon?'

'Every cent of it.'

'And you fellows got away with them?'

'As easy as nothing. I don't reckon the julery people know they've been robbed yet. But it wouldn't be good sense to stay around St. Louis, of course, so we considered where we'd go. One was for going one way, one another, so we throwed up, heads or tails, and the Upper Mississippi won. We done up the di'monds in a paper and put our names on it and put it in the keep of the hotel clerk, and

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

told him not to ever let either of us have it again without the others was on hand to see it done; then we went down town, each by his own self—because I reckon maybe we all had the same notion. I don't know for certain, but I reckon maybe we had.'

'What notion?' Tom says.

'To rob the others.'

'What—one take everything after all of you had helped to get it?'

'Cert'nly.'

It disgusted Tom Sawyer, and he said it was the orneriest, low-downest thing he ever heard of. But Jake Dunlap said it warn't unusual in the profession. Said when a person was in that line of business he'd got to look out for his own intrust, there warn't nobody else going to do it for him. And then he went on. He says :

'You see, the trouble was, you couldn't divide up two di'monds amongst three. If there'd been three—— But never mind about that, there warn't three. I loafed along the back streets studying and studying. And I says to myself, I'll hog them di'monds the first chance I get, and I'll have a disguise all ready,



## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

and I'll give the boys the slip, and when I'm safe away I'll put it on, and then let them find me if they can. So I got the false whiskers and the goggles and this countrified suit of clothes, and fetched them along back in a hand-bag ; and when I was passing a shop where they sell all sorts of things, I got a glimpse of one of my pals through the window. It was Bud Dixon. I was glad, you bet. I says to myself, I'll see what he buys. So I kept shady, and watched. Now what do you reckon it was he bought ?'

' Whiskers ? ' said I,

' No.'

' Goggles ? '

' No.'

' Oh, keep still, Huck Finn, can't you, you're only just hendering all you can. What *was* it he bought, Jake ? ' .

' You'd never guess in the world. It was only just a screw-driver—just a wee little bit of a screw-driver.'

' Well, I declare ! What did he want with that ? '

' That's what I thought. It was curious. It clean stumped me. I says to myself, what

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

can he want with that thing? Well, when he come out I stood back out of sight, and then tracked him to a second-hand slop-shop and see him buy a red flannel shirt and some old ragged clothes—just the ones he's got on now, as you've described. Then I went down to the wharf and hid my things aboard the up-river boat that we had picked out, and then started back and had another streak of luck. I seen our other pal lay in *his* stock of old rusty second-handers. We got the di'monds and went aboard the boat.

'But now we was up a stump,' for we couldn't go to bed. We had to set up and watch one another. Pity, that was; pity to put that kind of a strain on us, because there was bad blood between us from a couple of weeks back, and we was only friends in the way of business. Bad anyway, secing there was only two di'monds betwixt three men. First we had supper, and then tramped up and down the deck together smoking till most midnight; then we went and set down in my state-room and locked the doors and looked in the piece of paper to see if the di'monds was all right, then laid it on the lower berth right in full sight;

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

and there we set, and set, and by-and-by it got to be dreadful hard to keep awake. At last Bud Dixon he dropped off. As soon as he was snoring a good regular gait that was likely to last, and had his chin on his breast and looked permanent, Hal Clayton nodded towards the di'monds and then towards the outside door, and I understood. I reached and got the paper, and then we stood up and waited perfectly still; Bud never stirred; I turned the key of the outside door very soft and slow, then turned the knob the same way, and we went tiptoeing out onto the guard, and shut the door very soft and gentle.

'There warn't nobody stirring anywhere, and the boat was slipping along, swift and steady, through the big water in the smoky moonlight. We never said a word, but went straight up onto the hurricane-deck and plumb back aft, and set down on the end of the skylight. Both of us knowed what that meant, without having to explain to one another. Bud Dixon would wake up and miss the swag, and would come straight for us, for he ain't afeared of anything or anybody, that man ain't. He would come, and we would heave him overboard, or get

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

killed trying. It made me shiver, because I ain't as brave as some people, but if I showed the white feather—well, I knowed better than do that. I kind of hoped the boat would land somers, and we could skip ashore and not have to run the risk of this row, I was so scared of Bud Dixon, but she was an upper-river tub and there warn't no real chance of that.

' Well, the time strung along and along, and that fellow never come! Why, it strung along till dawn begun to break, and still he never come. "Thunder," I says, "what do you make out of this? ain't it suspicious?" "Land!" Hal says, "do you reckon he's playing us? open the paper!" I done it, and by gracious there warn't anything in it but a couple of little pieces of loaf-sugar! *That's* the reason he could set there and snooze all night so comfortable. Smart? Well, I reckon! He had had them two papers all fixed and ready, and he had put one of them in place of t'other right under our noses.

' We felt pretty cheap. But the thing to do, straight off, was to make a plan; and we done it. We would do up the paper again, just as it was, and slip in, very elaborate and soft,

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

and lay it on the bunk again, and let on ~~we~~ didn't know about any trick, and hadn't any idea he was a-laughing at us behind them bogus snores of his'n ; and we would stick by him, and the first night we was ashore we would get him drunk and search him, and get the di'monds ; and *do* for him, too, if it warn't too risky. If we got the swag, we'd *got* to do for him, or he would hunt us down and do for us, sure. But I didn't have no real hope. I knowed we could get him drunk—he was always ready for that—but what's the good of it? You might search him a year and never find——

' Well, right there I caught my breath and broke off my thought! For an idea went ripping through my head that tore my brains to rags—and land, but I felt gay and good! You see, I had had my boots off, to unswell my feet, and just then I took up one of them to put it on, and I caught a glimpse of the heel-bottom, and it just took my breath away. You remember about that puzzlesome little screw-driver? '

' You bet I do,' says Tom, all excited.

' Well, when I caught that glimpse of that

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

boot heel, the idea that went smashing through my head was, *I* know where he's hid the di'monds! You look at this boot heel, now. See, it's bottomed with a steel plate, and the plate is fastened on with little screws. Now there wasn't a screw about that feller anywhere but in his boot heels ; so, if he needed a screw-driver, I reckoned I knowed why.'

'Huck, ain't it bully!' says Tom.

'Well, I got my boots on, and we went down and slipped in and laid the paper of sugar on the berth, and set down soft and sheepish and went to listening to Bud Dixon snore. Hal Clayton dropped off pretty soon, but I didn't ; I wasn't ever so wide-awake in my life. I was spying out from under the shade of my hat brim, searching the floor for leather. It took me a long time, and I begun to think maybe my guess was wrong, but at last I struck it. It laid over by the bulkhead, and was nearly the colour of the carpet. It was a little round plug about as thick as the end of your little finger, and I says to myself there's a di'mond in the nest you've come from. Before long I spied out the plug's mate.

'Think of the smartness and coolness of

## **TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE**

that blatherskite ! He put up that scheme on us and reasoned out what we would do, and we went ahead and done it perfectly exact, like a couple of pudd'n-heads. He set there and took his own time to unscrew his heel-plates and cut out his plugs and stick in the di'monds and screw on his plates again. He allowed we would steal the bogus swag and wait all night for him to come up and get drowneded, and by George it's just what we done ! I think it was powerful smart.'

' You bet your life it was ! ' says Tom, just full of admiration. '

# TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

## CHAPTER IV

'WELL, all day we went through the humbug of watching one another, and it was pretty sickly business for two of us and hard to act out, I can tell you. About night we landed at one of them little Missouri towns high up towards Iowa, and had supper at the tavern, and got a room upstairs with a cot and a double bed in it, but I dumped my bag under a deal table in the dark hall whilst we was moving along it to bed, single file, me last, and the landlord in the lead with a tallow candle. We had up a lot of whisky, and went to playing high-low-jack for dimes, and as soon as the whisky begun to take hold of Bud we stopped drinking, but we didn't let him stop. We loaded him till he fell out of his chair and laid there snoring.

'We was ready for business now. I said we better pull our boots off, and his'n too, and not make any noise, then we could pull him and haul him around and ransack him without



## **TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE**

any trouble. So we done it. I set my boots and Bud's side by side, where they'd be handy. Then we stripped him and searched his seams and his pockets and his socks and the inside of his boots, and everything, and searched his bundle. Never found any di'monds. We found the screw-driver, and Hal says, "What do you reckon he wanted with that?" I said I didn't know; but when he wasn't looking I hooked it. At last Hal he looked beat and discouraged, and said we'd got to give it up. That was what I was waiting for. I says:

"There's one place we hain't searched."

"What place is that?" he says.

"His stomach."

"By gracious, I never thought of that! *Now* we're on the homestretch, to a dead moral certainty. How'll we manage?"

"Well," I says, "just stay by him till I turn out and hunt up a drug-store, and I reckon I'll fetch something that'll make them di'monds tired of the company they're keeping."

He said that's the ticket, and with him looking straight at me I slid myself into Bud's boots instead of my own, and he never noticed. They was just a shade large for me, but that

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

was considerable better than being too small. I got my bag as I went a-groping through the hall, and in about a minute I was out the back way and stretching up the river road at a five-mile gait.

‘And not feeling so very bad, neither—walking on di’monds don’t have no such effect. When I had gone fifteen minutes, I says to myself, there’s more’n a mile behind me, and everything quiet. Another five minutes, and I says there’s considerable more land behind me now, and there’s a man back there that’s begun to wonder what’s the trouble. Another five, and I says to myself he’s getting real uneasy—he’s walking the floor now. Another five, and I says to myself, there’s two mile and a half behind me, and he’s *awful* uneasy—beginning to cuss, I reckon. Pretty soon I says to myself, forty minutes gone—he *knows* there’s something up! Fifty minutes—the truth’s a-busting on him now! He is reckoning I found the di’monds whilst we was searching, and shoved them in my pocket and never let on—yes, and he’s starting out to hunt for me. He’ll hunt for new tracks in the dust, and they’ll as likely send him down the river as up.

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

‘Just then I see a man coming down on a mule, and before I thought I jumped into the bush. It was stupid! When he got abreast he stopped and waited a little for me to come out; then he rode on again. But I didn’t feel gay any more. I says to myself I’ve botched my chances by that; I surely have, if he meets up with Hal Clayton.

‘Well, about three in the morning I fetched Elexandria, and see this stern-wheeler laying there, and was very glad, because I felt perfectly safe, now, you know. It was just daybreak. I went aboard and got this state-room, and put on these clothes, and went up in the pilot-house—to watch, though I didn’t reckon there was any need of it. I set there and played with my di’monds and waited and waited for the boat to start, but she didn’t. You see, they was mending her machinery, but I didn’t know anything about it, not being very much used to steam-boats.

‘Well, to cut the tale short, we never left there till plumb noon; and long before that I was hid in this state-room; for before breakfast I see a man coming, away off, that had a gait like Hal Clayton’s, and it made me just sick.

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

I says to myself, if he finds out I'm aboard this boat, he's got me like a rat in a trap. All he's got to do is to have me watched, and wait—wait till I slip ashore, thinking he is a thousand miles away, then slip after me and dog me to a good place and make me give up the di'monds, and then he'll—oh, *I* know what he'll do! Ain't it awful—awful! And now to think the *other* one's aboard, too! Oh, ain't it hard luck, boys—ain't it hard! But you'll help save me, *won't* you?—oh, boys, be good to a poor devil that's being hunted to death, and save me—I'll worship the very ground you walk on!'

We turned in and soothed him down, and told him we would plan for him and help him, and he needn't be so afeard; and so by-and-by he got to feeling kind of comfortable again, and unscrewed his heel-plates and held up his di'monds this way and that, admiring them and loving them; and when the light struck into them they *was* beautiful, sure; why, they seemed to kind of bust, and snap fire out all around. But all the same I judged he was a fool. If I had been him I would a handed the di'monds to them pals and got them to go ashore and leave me alone. But he was made

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

different. He said it was a whole fortune, and he couldn't bear the idea.

Twice we stopped to fix the machinery, and laid a good while, once in the night; but it wasn't dark enough, and he was afeard to skip. But the third time we had to fix it there was a better chance. We laid up at a country wood-yard, about forty mile above Uncle Silas's place, a little after one at night, and it was thickening up and going to storm. So Jake he laid for a chance to slide. We begun to take in wood. Pretty soon the rain come a-drenching down, and the wind blowed hard. Of course every boat-hand fixed a gunny sack, and put it on like a bonnet, the way they do when they are toting wood, and we got one for Jake, and he slipped down aft with his hand-bag, and come tramping forrard just like the rest, and walked ashore with them, and when we see him pass out of the light of the torch-basket and get swallowed up in the dark, we got our breath again and just felt grateful and splendid. But it wasn't for long. Somebody told, I reckon; for in about eight or ten minutes them two pals come tearing forrard as tight as they could jump and darted ashore and was gone. We

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

waited plumb till dawn for them to come back, and kept hoping they would, but they never did. We was awful sorry and low-spirited. All the hope we had was that Jake had got such a start that they couldn't get on his track, and he would get to his brother's and hide there and be safe.

He was going to take the river road, and told us to find out if Brace and Jubiter was to home and no strangers there, and then slip out about sundown and tell him. Said he would wait for us in a little bunch of sycamores right back of Tom's Uncle Silas's tobacker-field on the river road, a lonesome place.

We set and talked a long time about his chances, and Tom said he was all right if the pals struck up the river instead of down, but it wasn't likely, because maybe they knowed where he was from ; more likely they would go right, and dog him all day, him not suspecting, and kill him when it come dark, and take the boots. So we was pretty sorrowful.

# **TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE**

## **CHAPTER V**

**WE** didn't get done tinkering the machinery till away late in the afternoon, and so it was so close to sundown when we got home that we never stopped on our road, but made a break for the sycamores as tight as we could go, to tell Jake what the delay was, and have him wait till we could go to Brace's and find out how things was there. It was getting pretty dim by the time we turned the corner of the woods, sweating and panting with that long run, and see the sycamores thirty yards ahead of us ; and just then we see a couple of men run into the bunch and heard two or three 'terrible screams for help. ' Poor Jake is killed, sure,' we says. We was scared through and through, and broke for the tobacker-field and hid there, trembling so our clothes would hardly stay on ; and just as we skipped in there, a couple of men went tearing by, and into the bunch they went, and in a second out jumps

## TOM SAWYER. DETECTIVE

four men and took out up the road as tight as they could go, two chasing two.

We laid down, kind of weak and sick, and listened for more sounds, but didn't hear none for a good while but just our hearts. We was thinking of that awful thing laying yonder in the sycamores, and it seemed like being that close to a ghost, and it give me the cold shudders. The moon come a-swelling up out of the ground, now, powerful big and round and bright, behind a comb of trees, like a face looking through prison bars, and the black shadders and white places begun to creep around, and it was miserable quiet and still and night-breezy and graveyardy and scary. All of a sudden Tom whispers :

'Look!—what's that?'

'Don't!' I says. 'Don't take a person by surprise that way. I'm 'most ready to die, anyway, without you doing that.'

'Look, I tell you. It's something coming out of the sycamores.'

'Don't, Tom!'

'It's terrible tall!'

'Oh, lordy-lordy! let's——'

'Keep still—it's a-coming this way.'



## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

He was so excited he could hardly get *breath enough to whisper. I had to look. I couldn't help it.* So now we was both on our knees with our chins on a fence-rail and gazing—yes, and gasping, too. It was coming down the road—coming in the shadder of the trees, and you couldn't see it good; not till it was pretty close to us; then it stepped into a bright splotch of moonlight, and we sunk right down in our tracks—it was Jake Dunlap's ghost. That was what we said to ourselves.

We couldn't stir for a minute or two; then it was gone. We talked about it in low voices. Tom says :

'They're mostly dim and smoky, or like they're made out of fog, but this one wasn't.'

'No,' I says; 'I seen the goggles and the whiskers perfectly plain.'

'Yes, and the very colours in them loud countrified Sunday clothes—plaid breeches, green and black——'

'Cotton-velvet westcot, fire-red and yaller squares——'

'Leather straps to the bottoms of the breeches legs and one of them hanging unbuttoned——'

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

‘Yes, and that hat——’

‘What a hat for a ghost to wear!’

You see it was the first season anybody wore that kind—a black stiff-brim stovepipe, very high, and not smooth, with a round top—just like a sugar-loaf.

‘Did you notice if it’s hair was the same, Huck?’

‘No—seems to me I did, then again it seems to me I didn’t.’

‘I didn’t either; but it had its bag along, I noticed that.’

‘So did I. How can there be a ghost-bag, Tom?’

‘Sho! I wouldn’t be as ignorant as that if I was you, Huck Finn. Whatever a ghost has, turns to ghost-stuff. They’ve got to have their things, like anybody else. You see, yourself, that its clothes was turned to ghost-stuff. Well, then, what’s to hender its bag from turning, too? Of course it done it.’

That was reasonable. I couldn’t find no fault with it. Bill Withers and his brother Jack come along by, talking, and Jack says:

‘What do you reckon he was toting?’

‘I dunno; but it was pretty heavy.’

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

‘Yes, all he could lug. Nigger stealing corn from old Parson Silas, I judged.’

‘So did I. And so I allowed I wouldn’t let on to see him.’

‘That’s me, too!’

Then they both laughed, and went on out of hearing. It showed how unpopular old Uncle Silas had got to be, now. They wouldn’t a let a nigger steal anybody else’s corn and never done anything to him.

We heard some more voices mumbling along towards us and getting louder, and sometimes a cackle of a laugh. It was Lem Beebe and Jim Lane. Jim Lane says:

‘Who?—Jubiter Dunlap?’

‘Yes.’

‘Oh, I don’t know. I reckon so. I seen him spading up some ground along about an hour ago, just before sundown—him and the parson. Said he guessed he wouldn’t go to-night, but we could have his dog if we wanted him.’

‘Too tired, I reckon.’

‘Yes—works so hard!’

‘Oh, you bet!’

They cackled at that, and went on by. Tom

## **TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE**

**said we better jump out and tag along after them, because they was going our way and it wouldn't be comfortable to run across the ghost all by ourselves. So we done it, and got home all right.**

**That night was the second of September—a Saturday. I sha'n't ever forget it. You'll see why, pretty soon.**

# **TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE**

## **CHAPTER VI**

**WE** tramped along behind Jim and Lem till we come to the back stile where old Jim's cabin was that he was captivated in, the time we set him free, and here come the dogs piling around us to say howdy, and there was the lights of the house, too ; so we warn't afeard any more, and was going to climb over, but Tom says :

‘Hold on ; set down here a minute. By George !’

‘What's the matter ?’ says I.

‘Matter enough !’ he says. ‘Wasn't you expecting we would be the first to tell the family who it is that's been killed yonder in the sycamores, and all about them rapsCALLIONS that done it, and about the di'monds they've smouched off of the corpse, and paint it up fine, and have the glory of being the ones that knows a lot more about it than anybody else ?’

‘Why, of course. It wouldn't be you, Tom Sawyer, if you was to let such a chance go by.

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

I reckon it ain't going to suffer none for lack of paint,' I says, 'when you start in to scollop the facts.'

'Well, now,' he says perfectly ca'm, 'what would you say if I was to tell you I ain't going to start in at all?'

I was astonished to hear him talk so. I says:

'I'd say it's a lie. You ain't in earnest, Tom Sawyer.'

'You'll soon see. Was the ghost bare-footed?'

'No, it wasn't. What of it?'

'You wait—I'll show you what. Did it have its boots on?'

'Yes. I seen them plain.'

'Swear it?'

'Yes, I swear it.'

'So do I. Now do you know what that means?'

'No. What does it mean?'

'Means that them thieves *didn't* get the di'monds!'

'Jimminy! What makes you think that?'

'I don't only think it, I know it. Didn't the breeches and goggles and whiskers and hand-

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

bag and every blessed thing turn to ghost-stuff ? Everything it had on turned, didn't it ? It shows that the reason its boots turned too was because it still had them on after it started to go ha'nting around, and if that ain't proof that them blather-skites didn't get the boots, I'd like to know what you'd *call* proof.'

Think of that, now. I never see such a head as that boy had. Why, *I* had eyes and could see things, but they never meant nothing to me. But Tom Sawyer was different. When Tom Sawyer seen a thing it just got up on its hind legs and *talked* to him—told him everything it knowed. *I* never see such a head.

'Tom Sawyer,' I says, 'I'll say it again as I've said it a many a time before : I ain't fitten to black your boots. But that's all right—that's neither here nor there. God Almighty made us all, and some He gives eyes that's blind, and some He gives eyes that can see, and I reckon it ain't none of our lookout what He done it for ; it's all right, or He'd a fixed it some other way. Go on—I see plenty plain enough, now, that them thieves didn't get away with the di'monda. Why didn't they, do you reckon ? '

'Because they got chased away by them

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

other two men before they could pull the boots off of the corpse.'

'That's so! I see it now. But looky-here, Tom, why ain't we to go and tell about it?'

'Oh, shucks, Huck Finn, can't you see? Look at it. What's a-going to happen? There's going to be an inquest in the morning. Them two men will tell how they heard the yells and rushed there just in time to not save the stranger. Then the jury'll twaddle and twaddle and twaddle, and finally they'll fetch in a verdict that he got shot or stuck or busted over the head with something, and come to his death by the inspiration of God. And after they've buried him they'll auction off his things for to pay the expenses, and then's *our* chance.'

'How, Tom?'

'Buy the boots for two dollars!'

Well, it 'most took my breath.

'My land! Why, Tom, *we'll* get the di'monds!'

'You bet. Some day there'll be a big reward offered for them—a thousand dollars, sure. That's our money! Now we'll trot in and see the folks. And mind you we don't know any-



## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

thing about any murder, or any di'monds, or any thieves—don't you forget that.'

I had to sigh a little over the way he had got it fixed. *I'd a sold* them di'monds—yes, sir—for twelve thousand dollars: but I didn't say anything. It wouldn't done any good. I says:

'But what are we going to tell your Aunt Sally has made us so long getting down here from the village, Tom?'

'Oh, I'll leave that to you,' he says. 'I reckon you can explain it somehow.'

He was always just that strict and delicate. He never would tell a lie himself.

We struck across the big yard, noticing this, that, and t'other thing that was so familiar, and we so glad to see it again, and when we got to the roofed big passageway betwixt the double log house and the kitchen part, there was every thing hanging on the wall just as it used to was, even to Uncle Silas's old faded green baize working-gown with the hood to it, and raggedy white patch between the shoulders that always looked like somebody had hit him with a snow-ball; and then we lifted the latch and walked in. Aunt Sally she was just a-ripping and a-tearing

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

around, and the children was huddled in one corner, and the old man he was huddled in the other and praying for help in time of need. She jumped for us with joy and tears running down her face and give us a whacking box on the ear, and then hugged us and kissed us and boxed us again, and just couldn't seem to get enough of it, she was so glad to see us ; and she says :

'Where *have* you been a-loafing to, you good-for-nothing trash? I've been that worried about you I didn't know what to do. Your traps has been here *ever* so long, and I've had supper cooked fresh about four times so 'as to have it hot and good when you come, till at last my patience is just plumb wore out, and I declare I—I—why I could skin you alive! You must be starving, poor things!—set down, set down, everybody ; don't lose no more time.'

It was good to be there again behind all that noble corn pone and spareribs, and everything that you could ever want in this world. Old Uncle Silas he peeled off one of his bulliest old-time blessings, with as many layers to it as an onion, and whilst the angels was hauling in the slack of it I was trying to study up what to say about what kept us so long. When our plates

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

was all loadened and we'd got agoing, she asked me, and I says :

‘ Well; you see,—er—Mizzes——’

‘ Huck Finn ! Since when am I Mizzes to you ? Have I ever been stingy of cuffs or kisses for you since the day you stood in this room and I took you for Tom Sawyer and blessed God for sending you to me, though you told me four thousand lies and I believed every one of them like a simpleton ? Call me Aunt Sally—like you always done.’

So I done it. And I says :

‘ Well, me and Tom allowed we would come along afoot and take a smell of the woods, and we run across Lem Beebe and Jim Lane, and they asked us to go with them blackberrying to-night, and said they could borrow Jubiter Dunlap's dog, because he had told them just that minute——’

‘ Where did they see him ? ’ says the old man ; and when I looked up to see how *he* come to take an intrust in a little thing like that, his eyes was just burning into me, he was that eager. It surprised me so it kind of throwed me off, but I pulled myself together again and says :

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

'It was when he was spading up some ground along with you, towards sundown or along there.'

He only said, 'Um,' in a kind of disappointed way, and didn't take no more intrust. So I went on. I says:

'Well, then, as I was a-saying——'

'That'll do, you needn't go no further.' It was Aunt Sally. She was boring right into me with her eyes, and very indignant. 'Huck Finn,' she says, 'how'd them men come to talk about going a-blackberrying in September—in *this* region?'

I see I had slipped up, and I couldn't say a word. She waited, still a-gazing at me, then she says:

'And how'd they come to strike that idiot idea of going a-blackberrying in the night?'

'Well, m'm, they—er—they told us they had a lantern, and——'

'Oh, *skat* up—do! Looky-here; what was they going to do with a dog?—hunt blackberries with it?'

'I think, m'm, they——'

'Now, Tom Sawyer, what kind of a lie are you fixing *your* mouth to contribit to this mean

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

of rubbage? Speak out—and I warn you before you begin, that I don't believe a word of it. You and Huck's been up to something you no business to—I know it perfectly well; I know you, *both* of you. Now you explain that dog, and them blackberries, and the lantern, and the rest of that rot—and mind you talk as straight as a string—do you hear?'

Tom he looked considerable hurt, and says, very dignified :

'It is a pity if Huck is to be talked to that away, just for making a little bit of a mistake that anybody could make.'

'What mistake has he made?'

'Why, only the mistake of saying blackberries when of course he meant strawberries.'

'Tom Sawyer, I lay if you aggravate me a little more, I'll——'

'Aunt Sally, without knowing it—and of course without intending it—you are in the wrong. If you'd a studied natural history the way you ought, you would know that all over the world except just here in Arkansaw they *always* hunt strawberries with a dog—and a lantern——'

But she busted in on him there and just

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

piled into him and snowed him under. She was so mad she couldn't get the words out fast enough, and she gushed them out in one everlasting freshet. That was what Tom Sawyer was after. He allowed to work her up and get her started and then leave her alone and let her burn herself out. Then she would be so aggravated with that subject that she wouldn't say another word about it, nor let anybody else. Well, it happened just so. When she was tuckered out and had to hold up, he says, quite ca'm :

‘ And yet, all the same, Aunt Sally——’

‘ Shet up !’ she says, ‘ I don't want to hear another word out of you.’

So we was perfectly safe, then, and didn't have no more trouble about that delay. Tom done it elegant.

# **TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE**

## **CHAPTER VII**

**BENNY** she was looking pretty sober, and she sighed some, now and then ; but pretty soon she got to asking about Mary, and Sid, and Tom's Aunt Polly, and then Aunt Sally's clouds cleared off and she got in a good humour and joined in on the questions and was her lovingest best self, and so the rest of the supper went along gay and pleasant. But the old man he didn't take any hand hardly, and was absent-minded and restless, and done a considerable amount of sighing ; and it was kind of heart-breaking to see him so sad and troubled and worried.

By-and-by, a spell after supper, come a nigger and knocked on the door and put his head in with his old straw hat in his hand bowing and scraping, and said his Marse Brace was out at the stile and wanted his brother, and was getting tired waiting supper for him, and would Marse Silas please tell him where he

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

was? I never see Uncle Silas speak up so sharp and fractious before. He says :

'Am I his brother's keeper?' And then he kind of wilted together, and looked like he wished he hadn't spoken so, and then he says, very gentle: 'But you needn't say that, Billy; I was took sudden and irritable, and I ain't very well these days, and not hardly responsible. Tell him he ain't here.'

And when the nigger was gone he got up and walked the floor, backwards and forwards, mumbling and muttering to himself and ploughing his hands through his hair. It was real pitiful to see him. Aunt Sally she whispered to us and told us not to take notice of him, it embarrassed him. She said he was always thinking and thinking, since these troubles come on, and she allowed he didn't more'n about half know what he was about when the thinking spells was on him; and she said he walked in his sleep considerable more now than he used to, and sometimes wandered around over the house and even outdoors in his sleep, and if we catched him at it we must let him alone and not disturb him. She said she reckoned it didn't do him no harm, and



## **TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE**

maybe it done him good. She said Benny was the only one that was much help to him these days. Said Benny appeared to know just when to try to soothe him and when to leave him alone.

So he kept on tramping up and down the floor and muttering, till by-and-by he begun to look pretty tired; then Benny she went and snuggled up to his side and put one hand in his and one arm around his waist and walked with him; and he smiled down on her, and reached down and kissed her; and so, little by little the trouble went out of his face and she persuaded him off to his room. They had very petting ways together, and it was uncommon pretty to see.

Aunt Sally she was busy getting the children ready for bed; so by-and-by it got dull and tedious, and me and Tom took a turn in the moonlight, and fetched up in the watermelon-patch and et one, and had a good deal of talk. And Tom said he'd bet the quarrelling was all Jubiter's fault, and he was going to be on hand the first time he got a chance, and see; and if it was so, he was going to do his level best to get Uncle Silas to turn him off.

## **TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE**

**And so we talked and smoked and stuffed watermelon as much as two hours, and then it was pretty late, and when we got back the house was quiet and dark, and everybody gone to bed.**

**Tom he always seen everything, and now he see that the old green baize work-gown was gone, and said it wasn't gone when we went out; and so we allowed it was curious, and then we went up to bed.**

**We could hear Benny stirring around in her room, which was next to ourn, and judged she was worried a good deal about her father and couldn't sleep. We found we couldn't, neither. So we set up a long time, and smoked and talked in a low voice, and felt pretty dull and downhearted. We talked the murder and the ghost over and over again, and got so creepy and crawly we couldn't get sleepy nohow and noway.**

**By-and-by, when it was away late in the night and all the sounds was late sounds and solemn, Tom nudged me and whispers to me to look, and I done it, and there we see a man poking around in the yard like he didn't know just what he wanted to do, but it was pretty**

## **TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE**

dim and we couldn't see him good. Then he started for the stile, and as he went over it the moon come out strong, and he had a long handled shovel over his shoulder, and we see the white patch on the old work-gown. So Tom says :

' He's a-walking in his sleep. I wish we was allowed to follow him and see where he's going to. There, he's turned down by the tobacker-field. Out of sight now. It's a dreadful pity he can't rest no better.'

We waited a long time, but he didn't come back any more, or if he did he come around the other way ; so at last we was tuckered out and went to sleep and had nightmares, a million of them. But before dawn we was awake again, because meantime a storm had come up and been raging, and the thunder and lightning was awful, and the wind was a-thrashing the trees around, and the rain was driving down in slanting sheets, and the gullies was running rivers. Tom says :

' Looky-here, Huck, I'll tell you one thing that's mighty curious. Up to the time we went out, last night, the family hadn't heard about Jake Dunlap being murdered. Now the men

## **TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE**

that chased Hal Clayton and Bud Dixon away would spread the thing around in a half an hour, and every neighbour that heard it would shin out and fly around from one farm to t'other and try to be the first to tell the news. Land, they don't have such a big thing as that to tell twice in thirty year! Huck, it's mighty strange; I don't understand it.'

So then he was in a fidget for the rain to let up, so we could turn out and run across some of the people and see if they would say anything about it to us. And he said if they did we must be horribly surprised and shocked.

We was out and gone the minute the rain stopped. It was just broad day, then. We loafed along up the road, and now and then met a person and stopped and said howdy, and told them when we come, and how we left the folks at home, and how long we was going to stay, and all that, but none of them said a word about that thing; which was just astonishing, and no mistake. Tom said he believed if we went to the sycamores we would find that body laying there solitary and alone, and not a soul around. Said he believed the men chased the thieves so far into the woods that the thieves

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

prob'ly seen a good chance and turned on them at last, and maybe they all killed each other, and so there wasn't anybody left to toll.

First we knowed, gabbling along that away, we ~~was~~ right at the sycamores. The cold chills trickled down my back and I wouldn't budge another step, for all Tom's persuading. But he couldn't hold in; he'd *got* to see if the boots was safe on that body yet. So he crope in—and the next minute out he come again with his eyes bulging he was so excited, and says:

'Huck, it's gone!'

I *was* astonished! I says:

'Tom, you don't mean it.'

'It's gone, sure. There ain't a sign of it. The ground is trampled some, but if there was any blood it's all washed away by the storm, for it's all puddles and slush in there.'

At last I give in, and went and took a look myself; and it was just as Tom said—there wasn't a sign of a corpse.

'Dern it,' I says, 'the di'monds is gone. Don't you reckon the thieves slunk back and lugged him off, Tom?'

'Looks like it. It just does. Now where'd they hide him, do you reckon?'

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

'I don't know,' I says, disgusted, 'and what's more I don't care. They've got the boots, and that's all I cared about. He'll lay around these woods a long time before I hunt him up.'

Tom didn't feel no more intrust in him neither, only curiosity to know what come of him; but he said we'd lay low and keep dark and it wouldn't be long till the dogs or somebody roused him out.

We went back home to breakfast ever so bothered and put out and disappointed and swindled. I warn't ever so down on a corpse before.

# **TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE**

## **CHAPTER VIII**

It warn't very cheerful at breakfast. Aunt Sally she looked old and tired, and let the children snarl and fuss at one another and didn't seem to notice it was going on, which wasn't her usual style; me and Tom had a plenty to think about without talking; Benny she looked like she hadn't much sleep, and whenever she'd lift her head a little and steal a look towards her father you could see there was tears in her eyes; and as for the old man, his things staid on his plate and got cold without him knowing they was there, I reckon, for he was thinking and thinking all the time, and never said a word and never et a bite.

By-and-by when it was stillest, that nigger's head was poked in at the door again, and he said his Marse Brace was getting powerful uneasy about Marse Jubiter, which hadn't come home yet, and would Marse Silas please——

He was looking at Uncle Silas, and he

## TOM SAWYER. DETECTIVE

stopped there, like the rest of his words was froze ; for Uncle Silas he rose up shaky and steadied himself leaning his fingers on the table, and he was panting, and his eyes was set on the nigger, and he kept swallowing, and put his other hand up to his throat a couple of times, and at last he got his words started, and says :

‘ Does he—does he—think—*what* does he think ! Tell him—tell him——’ Then he sunk down in his chair limp and weak, and says, so as you could hardly hear him : ‘ Go away—go away !’

The nigger looked scared, and cleared out, and we all felt—well, I don’t know how we felt, but it was awful, with the old man panting there, and his eyes set and looking like a person that was dying. None of us could budge ; but Benny she slid around soft, with her tears running down, and stood by his side, and nestled his old grey head up against her and begun to stroke it and pet it with her hands, and nodded to us to go away, and we done it, going out very quiet, like the dead was there.

Me and Tom struck out for the woods mighty solemn, and saying how different it was now to what it was last summer when we was



## TOM SAWYEA, DETECTIVE

here, and everything was so peaceful and happy and everybody thought so much of Uncle Silas, and he was so cheerful and simple-hearted and pudd'nheaded and good—and now look at him. If he ~~hadn't~~ lost his mind he wasn't much short of it. That was what we allowed.

It was a most lovely day, now, and bright and sunshiny; and the further and further we went over the hill towards the prairie the lovelier and lovelier the trees and flowers got to be, and the more it seemed strange and somehow wrong that there had to be trouble in such a world as this. And then all of a sudden I caught my breath and grabbed Tom's arm, and all my livers and lungs and things fell down into my legs.

'There it is!' I says. We jumped back behind a bush, shivering, and Tom says:

'Sh!—don't make a noise.'

It was settin' on a log right in the edge of the little prairie, thinking. I tried to get Tom to come away, but he wouldn't, and I dasn't budge by myself. He said we mightn't ever get another chance to see one, and he was going to look his fill at this one if he died for it. So I looked too, though it give me the fantods to

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

do it. Tom he *had* to talk, but he talked low. He says :

' Poor Jakey, it's got all its things on, just as he said he would. *Now* you see what we wasn't certain about—it's half. It's *not* long, now, the way it was ; its got ~~it~~ cropped close to its head, the way he said he would. Huck, I never see anything look any more naturaler than what *it* does.'

' Nor I neither,' I says ; ~~I~~ I'd recognise it anywheres.'

' So would I. It looks perfectly solid and genuwyne, just the way it done before it died.'

So we kept a-gazing. Pretty soon Tom says :

' Huck, there's something mighty curious about this one, don't you know ? ' *It* oughtn't to be going around in the daytime.'

' That's so, Tom—I never heard the like of it before.'

' No, sir, they don't ever come out only at night—and then not till after twelve. There's something wrong about this one, now you mark my words. I don't believe its got any right to be around in the daytime. But don't it look natural! Jake was going to play deaf and

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

dumb here, so the neighbours wouldn't know his voice. 'Do you reckon it would do that if we was to holler at it?'

'Lordy, Tom, don't talk so! If you was to holler at it I'd die in my tracks.'

'Don't you worry, I ain't going to holler at it. Look, Huck, it's a-scratching its head—don't you see?'

'Well, what of it?'

'Why, this. What's the sense of it scratching its head? There ain't anything there to itch; it's head is made out of fog or something like that, and *can't* itch. A fog can't itch; any fool knows that.'

'Well, then, if it don't itch and can't itch, what in the nation is it scratching it for? Ain't it just habit, don't you reckon?'

'No, sir, I don't. I ain't a bit satisfied about the way this one acts. I've a blame good notion it's a bogus one—I have, as sure as I'm a-setting here. Because, if it—— Huck!'

'Well, what's the matter now?'

'*You can't see the bushes through it!*'

'Why, Tom, it's so, sure! It's as solid as a cow. I sort of begin to think——'

Huck, it's biting off a chaw of tobacker!

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

By George, *they* don't chaw—they hain't got anything to chaw *with*. Huck !'

'I'm a-listening.'

'It ain't a ghost at all. It's Jake Dunlap his own self !'

'Oh, your granny !' I says.

'Huck Finn, did we find any corpse in the sycamores ?'

'No.'

'Or any sign of one ?'

'No.'

'Mighty good reason. Hadn't ever been any corpse there.'

'Why, Tom, you know we heard——'

'Yes, we did—heard a howl or two. Does that prove anybody was killed ? Course it don't. And we seen four men run, then this one come walking out, and we took it for a ghost. No more ghost than you are. It was Jake Dunlap his own self, and it's Jake Dunlap now. He's been and got his hair cropped, the way he said he would, and he's playing himself for a stranger, just the same as he said he would. Ghost ! Him ?—he's as sound as a nut.'

Then I see it all, and how we had took too

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

much for granted. I was powerful glad he didn't get killed, and so was Tom, and we wondered which he would like the best—for us to never let on to know him, or how? Tom reckoned the best way would be to go and ask him. So he started; but I kept a little behind, because I didn't know but it might be a ghost after all. When Tom got to where he was, he says:

'Me and Huck's mighty glad to see you again, and you needn't be afeard we'll tell. And if you think it'll be safer for you if we don't let on to know you when we run across you, say the word, and you'll see you can depend on us, and would ruther cut our hands off than get you into the least little bit of danger.'

First off he looked surprised to see us, and not very glad, either; but as Tom went on he looked pleasanter, and when he was done he smiled, and nodded his head several times, and made signs with his hands, and says:

'Goo-goo—goo-goo,' the way deaf and dummies does.

Just then we see some of Steve Nickerson's people coming that lived t'other side of the prairie, so Tom says:

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

‘You do it elegant ; I never seen anybody do it better. You’re right ; play it on us, too ; play it on us same as the others ; it’ll keep you in practice and prevent you making blunders. We’ll keep away from you and let on we don’t know you, but any time we can be any help, you just let us know.’

Then we loafed along past the Nickersons, and of course they asked if that was the new stranger yonder, and where’d he come from, and what was his name, and which communion was he, Babtis’ or Methodis’, and which politics, Whig or Democrat, and how long is he staying, and all them other questions that humans always asks when a stranger comes, and dogs does too. But Tom said he warn’t able to make anything out of deaf and dumb signs, and the same with goo-gooing. Then we watched them go and bullyrag Jake ; because we was pretty uneasy for him. Tom said it would take him days to get so he wouldn’t forget he was a deaf and dummy sometimes, and speak out before he thought. When we had watched long enough to see that Jake was getting along all right and working his signs very good, we loafed along again, allowing to strike the

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

school-house about recess time, which was a three-mile tramp.

I was so disappointed not to hear Jake tell about the row in the sycamores, and how near he come to getting killed, that I couldn't seem to get over it, and Tom he felt the same, but said if we was in Jake's fix we would want to go careful and keep still, and not take any chances.

The boys and girls was all glad to see us again, and we had a real good time all through recess. Coming to school the Henderson boys had come across the new deaf and dummy, and told the rest; so all the scholars was chuck-full of him and couldn't talk about anything else, and was in a sweat to get a sight of him, because they hadn't ever seen a deaf and dummy in their lives, and it made a powerful excitement.

Tom said it was tough to have to keep mum now; said we would be heroes if we could come out and tell all we knowed; but, after all, it was still more heroic to keep mum; there warn't two boys in a million could do it. That was Tom Sawyer's idea about it, and I reckoned there warn't anybody could better it.

# **TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE**

## **CHAPTER IX**

**IN the next two or three days Dummy he got to be powerful popular. He went associating around with the neighbours, and they made much of him and was proud to have such a rattling curiosity amongst them. They had him to breakfast, they had him to dinner, they had him to supper ; they kept him loaded up with hog and hominy, and warn't ever tired staring at him and wondering over him, and wishing they knowed more about him, he was so uncommon and romantic. His signs warn't no good ; people couldn't understand them, and he prob'ly couldn't himself, but he done a sight of goo-gooing, and so everybody was satisfied, and admired to hear him go it. He toted a piece of slate around, and a pencil ; and people wrote questions on it and he wrote answers ; but there warn't anybody could read his writing but Brace Dunlap. Brace said he couldn't read it very good, but he could manage to dig**



## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

out the meaning most of the time. He said Dummy said he belonged away off somers, and used to be well off, but got busted by swindlers which he had trusted, and was poor now, and hadn't any way to make a living.

Everybody praised Brace Dunlap for being so good to that stranger. He let him have a little log cabin all to himself, and had his niggers take care of it, and fetch him all the vittles he wanted.

Dummy was at our house some, because old Uncle Silas was so afflicted himself, these days, that anybody else that was afflicted was a comfort to him. Me and Tom didn't let on that we had knowed him before, and he didn't let on that he had knowed us before. The family talked their troubles out before him the same as if he wasn't there, but we reckoned it wasn't any harm for him to hear what they said. Gener'ly he didn't seem to notice, but sometimes he did.

Well, two or three days went along, and everybody got to getting uneasy about Jubiter Dunlap. Everybody was asking everybody if they had any idea what had become of him. No, they hadn't, they said; and they shook

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

their heads and said there was something powerful strange about it. Another and another day went by ; then there was a report got around that praps he was murdered. You bet it made a big stir ! Everybody's tongue was clacking away after that. Saturday two or three gangs turned out and hunted the woods to see if they could run across his remainders. Me and Tom helped, and it was noble good times and exciting. Tom he was so brim-full of it he couldn't eat nor rest. He said if we could find that corpse we would be celebrated, and more talked about than if we got drowned.

The others got tired and give it up ; but not Tom Sawyer—that warn't his style. Saturday night he didn't sleep any, hardly, trying to think up a plan ; and towards daylight in the morning he struck it. He snaked me out of bed, and was all excited, and says—

' Quick, Huck, snatch on your clothes—I've got it ! Bloodhound ! '

In two minutes we was tearing up the river road in the dark towards the village. Old Jeff Hooker had a bloodhound, and Tom was going to borrow him. I says—

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

‘The trail’s too old, Tom—and besides, it’s rained, you know.’

‘It don’t make any difference, Huck. If the body’s hid in the woods anywhere around, the hound will find it. If he’s been murdered and buried, they wouldn’t bury him deep, it ain’t likely, and if the dog goes over the spot he’ll scent him, sure. Huck, we’re going to be celebrated, sure as you’re born!’

He was just a-blazing; and whenever he got afire he was most likely to get afire all over. That was the way this time. In two minutes he had got it all ciphered out, and wasn’t only just going to find the corpse—no, he was going to get on the track of that murderer and hunt *him* down, too; and not only that, but he was going to stick to him till——

‘Well,’ I says, ‘you better find the corpse first; I reckon that’s a plenty for to-day. For all we know, there *ain’t* any corpse and nobody hain’t been murdered. That cuss could a gone off somers and not been killed at all.’

That gravelled him, and he says—

‘Huck Finn, I never seen such a person as you to want to spoil everything. As long as

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

*you* can't see anything hopeful in a thing, you won't let anybody else. What good can it do you to throw cold water on that corpse and get up that selfish theory that there hain't been any murder? None in the world. I don't see how you can act so. I wouldn't treat you like that, and you know it. Here we've got a noble good opportunity to make a reputation, and——'

'Oh, go ahead,' I says, 'I'm sorry and I take it all back. I didn't mean nothing. Fix it any way you want it. *He* ain't any consequence to me. If he's killed, I'm as glad of it as you are ; and if he——'

'I never said anything about being glad ; I only——'

'Well, then, I'm as *sorry* as you are. Any way you druther have it, that is the way *I* druther have it. He——'

'There ain't any druthers *about* it, Huck Finn ; nobody said anything about druthers. And as for——'

He forgot he was talking, and went tramping along, studying. He begun to get excited again, and pretty soon he says—

'Huck, it'll be the bulliest thing that ever happened if we find the body after everybody

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

else has quit looking, and then go ahead and hunt up the murderer. It won't only be an honour to us, but it'll be an honour to Uncle Silas because it was us that done it. It'll set him up again, you see if it don't.'

But old Jeff Hooker he throwed cold water on the whole business when we got to his blacksmith shop and told him what we come for.

'You can take the dog,' he says, 'but you ain't a-going to find any corpse, because there ain't any corpse to find. Everybody's quit looking, and they're right. Soon as they come to think, they knowed there warn't no corpse. And I'll tell you for why. What does a person kill another person *for*, Tom Sawyer?—answer me that.'

'Why, he—er——'

'Answer up! You ain't no fool. What does he kill him *for*?'

'Well, sometimes it's for revenge, and——'

'Wait. One thing at a time. Revenge, says you; and right you are. Now who ever had anything agin that poor trifling no-account? Who do you reckon would want to kill *him*?—that rabbit!'

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

Tom was stuck. I reckon he hadn't thought of a person having to have a reason for killing a person before, and now he see it warn't likely anybody would have that much of a grudge against a lamb like Jubiter Dunlap. The blacksmith says, by-and-by—

'The revenge idea won't work, you see. Well, then, what's next? Robbery? B'gosh that must a been it, Tom! Yes, sir-ree, I reckon we've struck it this time. Some feller wanted his gallus-buckles, and so he——'

But it was so funny he busted out laughing, and just went *on* laughing and laughing and laughing till he was 'most dead, and Tom looked so put out and cheap that I knowed he was ashamed he had come, and wished he hadn't. But old Hooker never let up on him. He raked up everything a person ever could want to kill another person about, and any fool could see they didn't any of them fit this case, and he just made no end of fun of the whole business, and of the people that had been hunting the body; and he said—

'If they'd had any sense they'd a knowed the lazy cuss slid out because he wanted a loafing spell after all this work. He'll come pottering

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

back in a couple of weeks, and then how'll you fellers feel? But, laws bless you! take the dog and go and hunt his remainders. Do, Tom.'

Then he busted out and had another of them forty-rod laughs of his'n. Tom couldn't back down after all this, so he said, 'All right, unchain him!' and the blacksmith done it, and we started home, and left that old man laughing yet.

It was a lovely dog. There ain't any dog that's got a lovelier disposition than a blood-hound, and this one knowed us and liked us. He capered and raced around ever so friendly, and was powerful glad to be free and have a holiday; but Tom was so cut up he couldn't take any intrust in him, and said he wished he'd stopped and thought a minute before he ever started on such a fool errand. He said old Jeff Hooker would tell everybody, and we'd never hear the last of it.

So we loafed along home down the back lanes, feeling pretty glum and not talking. When we was passing the far corner of our tobacker-field we heard the dog set up a long howl in there, and we went to the place, and he was scratching the ground with all his might,

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

and every now and then canting up his head sideways and fetching another howl.

It was a long square the shape of a grave ; the rain had made it sink down and show the shape. The minute we come and stood there we looked at one another and never said a word. When the dog had dug down only a few inches he grabbed something and pulled it up, and it was an arm and a sleeve. Tom kind of gasped out and says—

‘ Come away, Huck—it’s found.’

I just felt awful. We struck for the road and fetched the first men that come along. They got a spade at the crib and dug out the body, and you never see such an excitement. You couldn’t make anything out of the face, but you didn’t need to. Everybody said—

‘ Poor Jubiter ; it’s his clothes, to the last rag !’

Some rushed off to spread the news and tell the justice of the peace and have an inquest, and me and Tom lit out for the house. Tom was all afire and ’most out of breath when we come tearing in where Uncle Silas and Aunt Sally and Benny was. Tom sung out—

‘ Me and Huck’s found Jubiter Dunlap’s



## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

corpse all by ourselves with a bloodhound after everybody else had quit hunting and given it up ; and if it hadn't a been for us it never *would* a been found ; and he *was* murdered, too—they done it with a club or something like that ; and I'm going to start in and find the murderer, next, and I bet I'll do it ! '

Aunt Sally and Benny sprung up pale and astonished, but Uncle Silas fell right forward out of his chair onto the floor, and groans out—

' Oh, my God, you've found him *now* ! '

# TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

## CHAPTER X

THEM awful words froze us solid. We couldn't move hand or foot for as much as a half a minute. Then we kind of come to, and lifted the old man up and got him into his chair, and Benny petted him and kissed him and tried to comfort him, and poor old Aunt Sally she done the same; but, poor things, they was so broke up and 'scared and knocked out of their right minds that they didn't hardly know what they was about. With Tom it was awful; it 'most petrified him to think maybe he had got his uncle into a thousand times more trouble than ever, and maybe it wouldn't ever happened if he hadn't been so ambitious to get celebrated, and let the corpse alone the way the others done. But pretty soon he sort of come to himself again and says—

'Uncle Silas, don't you say another word like that. It's dangerous, and there ain't a shadder of truth in it.'

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

Aunt Sally and Benny was thankful to hear him say that, and they said the same ; but the old man he wagged his head sorrowful and hopeless, and the tears run down his face, and he says—

‘ No—I done it ; poor Jubiter, I done it.’

It was dreadful to hear him say it. Then he went on and told about it, and said it happened the day me and Tom come—along about sundown. He said Jubiter pestered him and aggravated him till he was so mad he just sort of lost his mind and grabbed up a stick and hit him over the head with all his might, and Jubiter dropped in his tracks. Then he was scared and sorry, and got down on his knees and lifted his head up, and begged him to speak and say he wasn’t dead ; and before long he come to, and when he see who it was holding his head, he jumped like he was ’most scared to death, and cleared the fence and tore into the woods and was gone. So he hoped he wasn’t hurt bad.

‘ But laws,’ he says, ‘ it was only just fear that give him that last little spurt of strength, and of course it soon played out, and he laid

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

down in the bush, and there wasn't anybody to help him, and he died.'

Then the old man cried and grieved, and said he was a murderer and the mark of Cain was on him, and he had disgraced his family and was going to be found out and hung. Tom said—

'No, you ain't going to be found out. You *didn't* kill him. *One* lick wouldn't kill him. Somebody else done it.'

'Oh, yes,' he says, 'I done it—nobody else. Who else had anything against him? Who else *could* have anything against him?'

He looked up kind of like he hoped some of us could mention somebody that could have a grudge against that harmless no-account, but of course it warn't no use—he *had* us; we couldn't say a word. He noticed that, and he saddened down again, and I never see a face so miserable and so pitiful to see. Tom had a sudden idea, and says—

'But hold on!—somebody *buried* him. Now who——'

He shut off sudden. I knowed the reason. It give me the cold shudders when he said them words, because right away I remembered

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

about us seeing Uncle Silas prowling around with a long-handled shovel away in the night that night. And I knowed Benny seen him too, because she was talking about it one day. The minute Tom shut off he changed the subject and went to begging Uncle Silas to keep mum, and the rest of us done the same, and said he *must*, and said it wasn't his business to tell on himself, and if he kept mum nobody would ever know, but if it was found out and any harm come to him it would break the family's hearts and kill them, and yet never do anybody any good. So at last he promised. We was all of us more comfortable then, and went to work to cheer up the old man. We told him all he'd got to do was to keep still and it wouldn't be long till the whole thing would blow over and be forgot. We all said there wouldn't anybody ever suspect Uncle Silas, nor ever dream of such a thing, he being so good and kind and having such a good character ; and Tom says, cordial and hearty, he says—

‘ Why, just look at it a minute ; just consider. Here is Uncle Silas, all these years a preacher—at his own expense ; all these years doing good with all his might and every way he can

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

think of—at his own expense, all the time; always been loved by everybody, and respected; always been peaceable and minding his own business, the very last man in this whole deestrect to touch a person, and everybody knows it. Suspect *him*? Why, it ain't any more possible than——'

'By authority of the State of Arkansaw—I arrest you for the murder of Jubiter Dunlap!' shouts the sheriff at the door.

It was awful. Aunt Sally and Benny flung themselves at Uncle Silas, screaming and crying, and hugged him and hung to him, and Aunt Sally said go away, she wouldn't ever give him up, they shouldn't have him, and the niggers they come crowding and crying to the door, and—well, I couldn't stand it; it was enough to break a person's heart: so I got out.

They took him up to the little one-horse jail in the village, and we all went along to tell him good-by, and Tom was feeling elegant, and says to me, 'We'll have a most noble good time and heaps of danger some dark night, getting him out of there, Huck, and it'll be talked about everywheres and we will be

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

celebrated ;' but the old man busted that scheme up the minute he whispered to him about it. He said no, it was his duty to stand whatever the law done to him, and he would stick to the jail plumb through to the end, even if there warn't no door to it. It disappointed Tom, and gravelled him a good deal, but he had to put up with it.

But he felt responsible and bound to get his Uncle Silas free ; and he told Aunt Sally, the last thing, not to worry, because he was going to turn in and work night and day and beat this game and fetch Uncle Silas out innocent ; and she was very loving to him, and thanked him, and said she knowed he would do his very best. And she told us to help Benny take care of the house and the children, and then we had a good-by cry all around and went back to the farm, and left her there to live with the jailer's wife a month till the trial in October.

# TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

## CHAPTER XI

WELL, that was a hard month on us all. Poor Benny, she kept up the best she could, and me and Tom tried to keep things cheerful there at the house, but it kind of went for nothing, as you may say. It was the same up at the jail. We went up every day to see the old people, but it was awful dreary, because the old man warn't sleeping much, and was walking in his sleep considerable, and so he got to looking fagged and miserable, and his mind got shaky, and we all got afraid his troubles would break him down and kill him. And whenever we tried to persuade him to feel cheerfuller, he only shook his head and said if we only knowed what it was to carry around a murderer's load on your heart we wouldn't talk that way. Tom and all of us kept telling him it *wasn't* murder, but just accidental killing, but it never made any difference—it was murder, and he wouldn't have



## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

it any other way. He actuly begun to come out plain and square towards trial-time and acknowledge that he *tried* to kill the man. Why, that was awful, you know. It made things seem fifty times as dreadful, and there warn't no more comfort for Aunt Sally and Benny. But he promised he wouldn't say a word about his murder when others was around, and we was glad of that.

Tom Sawyer racked the head off of himself all that month trying to plan some way out for Uncle Silas, and many's the night he kept me up 'most all night with this kind of tiresome work, but he couldn't seem to get on the right track no way. As for me, I reckoned a body might as well give it up, it all looked so blue and I was so downhearted ; but he wouldn't. He stuck to the business right along, and went on planning and thinking and ransacking his head.

So at last the trial come on, towards the middle of October, and we was all in the court. The place was jammed, of course. Poor old Uncle Silas ! he looked more like a dead person than a live one, his eyes was so hollow and he looked so thin and so mournful. Benny she

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

set on one side of him and Aunt Sally on the other, and they had veils on, and was full of trouble. But Tom he set by our lawyer, and had his finger in everywheres, of course. The lawyer let him, and the judge let him. He 'most took the business out of the lawyer's hands sometimes; which was well enough, because that was only a mud-turtle of a back-settlement lawyer, and didn't know enough to come in when it rains, as the saying is.

They swore in the jury, and then the lawyer for the prostitution got up and begun. He made a terrible speech against the old man, that made him moan and groan, and made Benny and Aunt Sally cry. The way *he* told about the murder kind of knocked us all stupid, it was so different from the old man's tale. He said he was going to prove that Uncle Silas was *seen* to kill Jubiter Dunlap, by two good witnesses, and done it deliberate, and *said* he was going to kill him the very minute he hit him with the club: and they seen him hide Jubiter in the bushes, and they seen that Jubiter was stone dead. And said Uncle Silas come later and lugged Jubiter down into the tobacker-field, and two men seen him do it. And said

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

Uncle Silas turned out, away in the night, and buried Jubiter, and a man seen him at it.

I says to myself, poor old Uncle Silas has been lying about it because he reckoned nobody seen him and he couldn't bear to break Aunt Sally's heart and Benny's; and right he was: as for me, I would a lied the same way, and so would anybody that had any feeling, to save them such misery and sorrow which *they* warn't no ways responsible for. Well, it made our lawyer look pretty sick; and it knocked Tom silly too, for a little spell; but then he braced up and let on that he warn't worried—but I knowed he *was*, all the same. And the people—my, but it made a stir amongst them!

And when that lawyer was done telling the jury what he was going to prove, he set down and begun to work his witnesses.

First, he called a lot of them to show that there was bad blood betwixt Uncle Silas and the diseased; and they told how they had heard Uncle Silas threaten the diseased, at one time and another, and how it got worse and worse, and everybody was talking about it, and how diseased got afraid of his life, and told two or

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

three of them he was certain Uncle Silas would up and kill him some time or another.

Tom and our lawyer asked them some questions, but it warn't no use, they stuck to what they said.

Next, they called up Lem Beebe, and he took the stand. It come into my mind, then, how Lem and Jim Lane had come along talking, that time, about borrowing a dog or something from Jubiter Dunlap ; and that brought up the blackberries and the lantern ; and that brought up Bill and Jack Withers, and how *they* passed by, talking about a nigger stealing Uncle Silas's corn ; and that fetched up our old ghost that come along about the same time and scared us so—and here *he* was, too, and a privileged character, on accounts of his being deaf and dumb and a stranger, and they had fixed him a chair inside the railing, where he could cross his legs and be comfortable, whilst the other people was all in a jam so they couldn't hardly breathe. So it all come back to me just the way it was that day ; and it made me mournful to think how pleasant it was up to then, and how miserable ever since.

Lem Beebe, ~~born~~ <sup>born</sup>, said : ' I was a-coming

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

along, that day, second of September, and Jim Lane was with me, and it was towards sundown, and we heard loud talk, like quarrelling, and we was very close, only the hazel bushes between (that's along the fence); and we heard a voice say: "I've told you more'n once I'd kill you," and knowed it was this prisoner's voice; and then we see a club come up above the bushes and down out of sight again, and heard a smashing thump, and then a groan or two; and then we crope soft to where we could see, and there laid Jubiter Dunlap dead, and this prisoner standing over him with the club; and the next he hauled the dead man into a clump of bushes and hid him, and then we stooped low, to be out of sight, and got away.'

Well, it was awful. It kind of froze everybody's blood to hear it, and the house was 'most as still whilst he was telling it as if there warn't nobody in it. And when he was done, you could hear them gasp and sigh, all over the house, and look at one another the same as to say, 'Ain't it perfectly terrible—ain't it awful!'

Now happened a thing that astonished me. All the time the first witnesses was proving the bad blood and the threats and all that, Tom

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

Sawyer was alive and laying for them ; and the minute they was through he went for them, and done his level best to catch them in lies and spile their testimony. But now, how different ! When Lem first begun to talk, and never said anything about speaking to Jubiter or trying to borrow a dog off of him, he was all alive and laying for Lem, and you could see he was getting ready to cross-question him to death pretty soon, and then I judged him and me would go on the stand by-and-by and tell what we heard him and Jim Lane say. But the next time I looked at Tom I got the cold shivers. Why, he was in the brownest study you ever see—miles and miles away. He warn't hearing a word Lem Beebe was saying ; and when he got through he was still in that brown study, just the same. Our lawyer joggled him, and then he looked up startled, and says, 'Take the witness if you want him. Lemme alone—I want to think.'

Well, that beat me. I couldn't understand it. And Benny and her mother—oh, they looked sick, they was so troubled. They shoved their veils to one side and tried to get his eye, but it warn't any use, and I couldn't get

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

his eye either. So the mud-turtle he tackled the witness, but it didn't amount to nothing; and he made a mess of it.

Then they called up Jim Lane, and he told the very same story over again, exact. Tom never listened to this one at all, but set there thinking and thinking, miles and miles away. So the mud-turtle went in alone again, and come out just as flat as he done before. The lawyer for the prostitution looked very comfortable, but the judge looked disgusted. You see, Tom was just the same as a regular lawyer, nearly, because it was Arkansaw law for a prisoner to choose anybody he wanted to help his lawyer, and Tom had had Uncle Silas shove him into the case, and now he was botching it, and you could see the judge didn't like it much.

All that the mud-turtle got out of Lem and Jim was this: he asked them—

'Why didn't you go and tell what you saw?'

'We was afraid we would get mixed up in it ourselves. And we was just starting down the river a-hunting for all the week besides; but as soon as we come back we found out they'd been searching for the body, so then we went and told Brace Dunlap all about it.'

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

‘When was that?’

‘Saturday night, September 9.’

The judge he spoke up and says—

‘Mr. Sheriff, arrest these two witnesses on suspicions of being accessary after the fact to the murder.’

The lawyer for the prostitution jumps up all excited, and says—

‘Your Honour! I protest against this extraordi—’

‘Set down! says the judge, pulling his bowie and laying it on his pulpit. ‘I beg you to respect the Court.’

So he done it. Then he called Bill Withers.

*Bill Withers*, sworn, said: ‘I was coming along about sundown, Saturday, September 2, by the prisoner’s field, and my brother Jack was with me, and we seen a man toting off something heavy on his back, and allowed it was a nigger stealing corn; we couldn’t see distinct; next we made out that it was one man carrying another; and the way it hung, so kind of limp, we judged it was somebody that was drunk; and by the man’s walk we said it was Parson Silas, and we judged he had found



## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

Sam Cooper drunk in the road, which he was always trying to reform him, and was toting him out of danger.'

It made the people shiver to think of poor old Uncle Silas toting off the diseased down to the place in his tobacker-field where the dog dug up the body, but there warn't much sympathy around amongst the faces, and I heard one cuss say, 'It's the coldest-blooded work I ever struck, lugging a murdered man around like that, and going to bury him like a animal, and him a preacher at that.'

Tom he went on thinking, and never took no notice ; so our lawyer took the witness and done the best he could, and it was plenty poor enough.

Then Jack Withers he come on the stand and told the same tale, just like Bill done.

And after him comes Brace Dunlap, and he was looking very mournful, and 'most crying ; and there was a rustle and a stir all around, and everybody got ready to listen, and lots of the women folks said, 'Poor cretur, poor cretur!' and you could see a many of them wiping their eyes.

*Brace Dunlap*, sworn, said : 'I was in con-

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

siderable trouble a long time about my poor brother, but I reckoned things warn't near so bad as he made out, and I couldn't make myself believe anybody would have the heart to hurt a poor harmless cretur like that'—(by jings, I was sure I seen Tom give a kind of a faint little start, and then look disappointed again)—'and you know I *couldn't* think a preacher would hurt him—it warn't natural to think such an onlikely thing—so I never paid much attention, and now I shan't ever, ever forgive myself; for if I had a-done different, my poor brother would be with me this day, and not laying yonder murdered, and him so harmless.' He kind of broke down there and choked up, and waited to get his voice; and people all around said the most pitiful things, and women cried; and it was very still in there and solemn, and old Uncle Silas, poor thing, he give a groan right out so everybody heard him. Then Brace he went on: 'Saturday, September 2, he didn't come home to supper. By-and-by I got a little uneasy, and one of my niggers went over to this prisoner's place, but come back and said he warn't there. So I got uneasier and uneasier, and couldn't rest. I went to bed, but

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

I couldn't sleep; and turned out, away late in the night, and went wandering over to this prisoner's place and all around about there a good while, hoping I would run across my poor brother, and never knowing he was out of his troubles and gone to a better shore——' So he broke down and choked up again, and most all the women was crying now. Pretty soon he got another start and says: 'But it warn't no use; so at last I went home and tried to get some sleep, but couldn't. Well, in a day or two everybody was uneasy, and they got to talking about this prisoner's threats, and took to the idea, which I didn't take no stock in, that my brother was murdered; so they hunted around and tried to find his body, but couldn't, and give it up. And so I reckoned he was gone off somers to have a little peace, and would come back to us when his troubles was kind of healed. But late Saturday night, the 9th, Lem Beebe and Jim Lane come to my house and told me all—told me the whole awful 'sassination, and my heart was broke. And *then* I remembered something that hadn't took no hold of me at the

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

time, because reports said this prisoner had took to walking in his sleep and doing all kind of things of no consequence, not knowing what he was about. I will tell you what that thing was that come back into my memory. Away late that awful Saturday night when I was wandering around about this prisoner's place, grieving and troubled, I was down by the corner of the tobacker-field and I heard a sound like digging in a gritty soil ; and I crope nearer and peeped through the vines that hung on the rail fence and seen this prisoner *shovelling*—shovelling with a long-handled shovel—heaving earth into a big hole that was most filled up ; his back was to me, but it was bright moonlight, and I knowed him by his old green baize work-gown with a splattery white patch in the middle of the back like somebody had hit him with a snowball. *He was burying the man he'd murdered !*

And he slumped down in his chair crying and sobbing, and 'most everybody in the house busted out wailing, and crying, and saying ' Oh, it's awful—awful—horrible ! ' and there was a most tremendous excitement, and you couldn't hear yourself think ; and right in the midst of

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

it 'up jumps old Uncle Silas, white as a sheet, and sings out—

*'It's true every word—I murdered him in cold blood !*

By Jackson, it petrified them ! People rose up wild all over the house, straining and staring for a better look at him, and the judge was hammering with his mallet, and the sheriff yelling 'Order—order in the court—order !'

And all the while the old man stood there a-quaking and his eyes a-burning, and not looking at his wife and daughter, which was clinging to him and begging him to keep still, but pawing them off with his hands and saying he *would* clear his black soul from crime, he *would* heave off this load that was more than he could bear, and he *wouldn't* bear it another hour ! And then he raged right along with his awful tale, everybody a-staring and gasping, judge, jury, lawyers, and everybody, and Benny and Aunt Sally crying their hearts out. And by George, Tom Sawyer never looked at him once ! Never once—just set there gazing with all his eyes at something else, I couldn't tell what. And so the old man raged right along, pouring his words out like a stream of fire :

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

'I killed him! I am guilty! But I never had the notion in my life to hurt him or harm him, spite of all them lies about my threatening him, till the very minute I raised the club—then my heart went cold!—then the pity all went out of it, and I struck to kill! In that one moment all my wrongs come into my mind; all the insults that that man and the scoundrel his brother, there, had put upon me, and how they had laid in together to ruin me with the people, and take away my good name, and *drive* me to some deed that would destroy me and my family that hadn't ever done *them* no harm, so help me God! And they done it in a mean revenge—for why? Because my innocent pure girl here at my side wouldn't marry that rich, insolent, ignorant coward, Brace Dunlap, who's been snivelling here over a brother he never cared a brass farthing for'—(I see Tom give a jump and look glad *this* time to a dead certainty)—'and in that moment I've told you about, I forgot my God and remembered only my heart's bitterness—God forgive me!—and I struck to kill. In one second I was miserably sorry—oh, filled with remorse; but I thought of my poor family, and I *must* hide

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

‘What I’d done for their sakes ; and I did hide that corpse in the bushes ; and presently I carried it to the tobacker-field ; and in the deep night I went with my shovel and buried it where——’

Up jumps Tom and shouts—

‘*Now*, I’ve got it!’ and waves his hand, oh, ever so fine and starchy, towards the old man, and says—

‘Set down ! A murder *was* done, but you never had no hand in it !’

Well, sir, you could a heard a pin drop. And the old man he sunk down kind of bewildered in his seat, and Aunt Sally and Benny didn’t know it, because they was so astonished and staring at Tom with their mouths open and not knowing what they was about. And the whole house the same. I never seen people look so helpless and tangled up, and I hain’t ever seen eyes bug out and gaze without a blink the way theirn did. Tom says, perfectly ca’m—

‘Your Honour, may I speak ?’

‘For God’s sake, yes—go on!’ says the judge, so astonished and mixed up he didn’t know what he was about hardly.

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

Then Tom he stood there and waited a second or two—that was for to work up an ‘effect,’ as he calls it—then he started in just as ca’m as ever, and says :

‘For about two weeks, now, there’s been a little bill sticking on the front of this court-house offering two thousand dollars reward for a couple of big di’monds—stole at St. Louis. Them di’monds is worth twelve thousand dollars. But never mind about that till I get to it. Now about this murder. I will tell you all about it—how it happened—who done it—every *detail*.’

You could see everybody nestle, now, and begin to listen for all they was worth.

‘This man here, Brace Dunlap, that’s been snivelling so about his dead brother that *you* know he never cared a straw for, wanted to marry that young girl there, and she wouldn’t have him. So he told Uncle Silas he would make him sorry. Uncle Silas knowed how powerful he was, and how little chance he had against such a man, and he was scared and worried, and done everything he could think of to smooth him over and get him to be good to him ; he even took his no-account brother



## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

Jubiter on the farm and give him wages, and stinted his own family to pay them ; and Jubiter done everything his brother could contrive to insult Uncle Silas, and fret and worry him, and try to drive Uncle Silas into doing him a hurt, so as to injure Uncle Silas with the people. And it done it. Everybody turned against him and said the meanest kind of things about him, and it graduly broke his heart—yes, and he was so worried and distressed that often he warn't hardly in his right mind.

‘ Well, on that Saturday that we’ve had so much trouble about, two of these witnesses here, Lem Beebe and Jim Lane, come along by where Uncle Silas and Jubiter Dunlap was at work—and that much of what they’ve said is true, the rest is lies. They didn’t hear Uncle Silas say he would kill Jubiter ; they didn’t hear no blow struck ; they didn’t see no dead man, and they didn’t see Uncle Silas hide anything in the bushes. Look at them now—how, they set there, wishing they hadn’t been so handy with their tongues ; anyway, they’ll wish it before I get done.

‘ That same Saturday evening, Bill and Jack Withers *did* see one man lugging off another

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

one. That much of what they said is true, and the rest is lies. First off they thought it was a nigger stealing Uncle Silas's corn—you notice it makes them look silly, now, to find out somebody overheard them say that. That's because they found out by-and-by who it was that was doing the lugging, and *they* know best why they swore here that they took it for Uncle Silas by the gait—which it *wasn't*, and they knowed it when they swore to that lie.

'A man out in the moonlight *did* see a murdered person put underground in the tobacker-field—but it wasn't Uncle Silas that done the burying. He was in his bed at that very time.

'Now, then, before I go on, I want to ask you if you've ever noticed this: that people, when they're thinking deep, or when they're worried, are most always doing something with their hands, and they don't know it and don't notice what it is their hands are doing. Some stroke their chins; some stroke their noses; some stroke up *under* their chin with their hand; some twirl a chain; some fumble a button; then there's some that draws a figure or a letter with their finger on their cheek, or under their

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE.

chin, or on their under lip. That's *my* way. When I'm restless, or worried, or thinking hard, I draw capital V's on my cheek or on my under lip or under my chin, and never anything *but* capital V's—and half the time I don't notice it and don't know I'm doing it.'

That was odd. That is just what I do ; only I make an O. And I could see people nodding to one another, same as they do when they mean '*that's* so.'

'Now, then, I'll go on. That same Saturday—no, it was the night before—there was a steamboat laying at Flagler's Landing, forty miles above here, and it was raining and storming like the nation. And there was a thief aboard, and he had them two big di'monds that's advertised out here on this court-house door ; and he slipped ashore with his hand-bag and struck out into the dark and the storm, and he was a-hoping he could get to this town all right and be safe. But he had two pals aboard the boat, hiding, and he knowed they was going to kill him the first chance they got and take the di'monds ; because all three stole them, and then this fellow he got hold of them and skipped.

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

‘Well, he hadn’t been gone more’n ten minutes before his pals found it out, and they jumped ashore and lit out after him. Prob’ly they burnt matches and found his tracks. Anyway, they dogged along after him all day Saturday and kept out of his sight; and towards sundown he come to the bunch of sycamores down by Uncle Silas’s field, and he went in there to get a disguise out of his hand-bag and put it on before he showed himself here in the town—and mind you he done that just a little after the time that Uncle Silas was hitting Jubiter Dunlap over the head with a club—for he *did* hit him.

‘But the minute the pals see that thief slide into the bunch of sycamores, they jumped out of the bushes and slid in after him.

‘They fell on him and clubbed him to death.

‘Yes, for all he screamed and howled so, they never had no mercy on him, but clubbed him to death. And two men that was running along the road heard him yelling that way, and they made a rush into the sycamore bunch—which was where they was bound for, anyway—and when the pals saw them they lit out,

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

and the two new men after them a-chasing them as tight as they could go. But only a minute or two—then these two new men slipped back very quiet into the sycamores.

‘*Then* what did they do? I will tell you what they done. They found where the thief had got his disguise out of his carpet-sack to put on ; so one of them strips and puts on that disguise.’

Tom waited a little here, for some more ‘effect’—then he says, very deliberate—

‘The man that put on that dead man’s disguise was—*Jubiter Dunlap!*’

‘Great Scott!’ everybody shouted all over the house, and old Uncle Silas he looked perfectly astonished.

‘Yes, it was Jubiter Dunlap. Not dead, you see. Then they pulled off the dead man’s boots and put Jubiter Dunlap’s old ragged shoes on the corpse and put the corpse’s boots on Jubiter Dunlap. Then Jubiter Dunlap staid where he was, and the other man lugged the dead body off in the twilight ; and after midnight he went to Uncle Silas’s house, and took his old green work-robe off of the peg where it always hangs in the passage betwixt the house

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

and the kitchen, and put it on, and stole the long-handled shovel and went off down into the tobacker-field and buried the murdered man.'

He stopped, and stood a half a minute. Then—

'And who do you reckon the murdered man *was*? It was—*Jake* Dunlap, the long-lost burglar!'

'Great Scott!'

'And the man that buried him was—*Brace* Dunlap, his brother!'

'Great Scott!'

'And who do you reckon is this mowing idiot here that's letting on all these weeks to be a deaf and dumb stranger? It's—*Jubiter* Dunlap!'

My land, they all busted out in a howl, and you never see the like of that excitement since the day you was born. And Tom he made a jump for Jubiter, and snaked off his goggles and his false whiskers, and there was the murdered man, sure enough, just as alive as anybody! And Aunt Sally and Benny they went to hugging and crying and kissing and smothering old Uncle Silas to that degree he

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

was more muddled and confused and mushed up in his mind than he ever was before, and that is saying considerable. And next, people begun to yell—

‘Tom Sawyer! Tom Sawyer! Shut up everybody, and let him go on! Go on, Tom Sawyer!’

Which made him feel uncommon bully, for it was nuts for Tom Sawyer to be a public character thataway, and a hero, as he calls it. So when it was all quiet, he says—

‘There ain’t much left, only this: When that man there, Brace Dunlap, had most worried the life and sense out of Uncle Silas, till at last he plumb lost his mind and hit this other blatherskite his brother with a club, I reckon he seen his chance. Jubiter broke for the woods to hide, and I reckon the game was for him to slide out in the night and leave the country. Then Brace would make everybody believe Uncle Silas killed him and hid his body somers; and that would ruin Uncle Silas and drive *him* out of the country—hang him, maybe; I dunno. But when they found their dead brother in the sycamores without knowing him, because he was so battered up, they see they

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

had a better thing : disguise *both* and bury Jake and dig him up presently all dressed up in Jubiter's clothes, and hire Jim Lane and Bill Withers and the others to swear to some handy lies—which they done. And there they set, now, and I told them they would be looking sick before I got done, and that is the way they're looking now.

' Well, me and Huck Finn here, we come down on the boat with the thieves, and the dead one told us all about the di'monds, and said the others would murder him if they got the chance ; and we was going to help him all we could. We was bound for the sycamores when we heard them killing him in there ; but we was in there in the early morning after the storm and allowed nobody hadn't been killed, after all. And when we see Jubiter Dunlap here spreading around in the very same disguise Jake told us *he* was going to wear, we thought it was Jake his own self—and he was goo-goo-ing deaf and dumb, and *that* was according to agreement.

' Well, me and Huck went on hunting for the corpse after the others quit, and we found it. And was proud, too ; but Uncle Silas, he



## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

knocked us crazy by telling us *he* killed the man. So we was mighty sorry we found the body, and was bound to save Uncle Silas's neck if we could ; and it was going to be tough work, too, because he wouldn't let us break him out of prison the way we done with our old nigger Jim, you remember.

'I done everything I could the whole month to think up some way to save Uncle Silas, but I couldn't strike a thing. So when we come into court to-day I come empty, and couldn't see no chance anywheres. But by-and-by I had a glimpse of something that set me thinking—just a little wee glimpse—only that, and not enough to make sure : but it set me thinking hard—and *watching*, when I was only letting on to think ; and by-and-by, sure enough, when Uncle Silas was piling out that stuff about *him* killing Jubiter Dunlap, I caught that glimpse again, and this time I jumped up and shut down the proceedings, because I *knowed* Jubiter Dunlap was a-setting here before me. I knowed him by a thing which I seen him do—and I remembered it. I'd seen him do it when I was here a year ago.'

He stopped then, and studied a minute—

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

laying for an 'effect'—I knowed it perfectly well. Then he turned off like he was going to leave the platform, and says, kind of lazy and indifferent—

'Well, I believe that is all.'

Why, you never heard such a howl!—and it come from the whole house :

'What *was* it you seen him do? Stay where you are, you little devil! You think you are going to work a body up till his mouth's a-watering and stop there? What *was* it he done?'

That was it, you see—he just done it to get an 'effect' ; you couldn't a pulled him off of that platform with a yoke of oxen.

'Oh, it wasn't anything much,' he says. 'I seen him looking a little excited when he found Uncle Silas was actuly fixing to hang himself for a murder that warn't ever done ; and he got more and more nervous and worried, I a-watch-ing him sharp but not seeming to look at him—and all of a sudden his hands begun to work and fidget, and pretty soon his left crept up and *his finger drawed a cross on his cheek*, and then I *had* him.'

Well, then they ripped and howled and

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

stomped and clapped their hands till Tom Sawyer was that proud and happy he didn't know what to do with himself. And then the judge he looked down over his pulpit and says—

'My boy, did you *see* all the various details of this strange conspiracy and tragedy that you've been describing?'

'No, your Honour, I didn't see any of them.'

'Didn't see any of them! Why, you've told the whole history straight through, just the same as if you'd seen it with your eyes. How did you manage that?'

Tom says, kind of easy and comfortable—

'Oh, just noticing the evidence and piecing this and that together, your Honour; just an ordinary little bit of detective work; anybody could a-done it.'

'Nothing of the kind! Not two in a million could a-done it. You are a very remarkable boy.'

Then they let go and give Tom another smashing round, and he—well, he wouldn't a sold out for a silver mine. Then the judge says—

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

'But are you certain you've got this curious history straight?'

'Perfectly, your Honour. Here is Brace Dunlap—let him deny his share of it if he wants to take the chance; I'll engage to make him wish he hadn't said anything. . . . Well, you see *he's* pretty quiet. And his brother's pretty quiet; and them four witnesses that lied so and got paid for it, they're pretty quiet. And as for Uncle Silas, it ain't any use for him to put in his oar, I wouldn't believe him under oath!'

Well, sir, that fairly made them shout; and even the judge he let go and laughed. Tom, he was just feeling like a rainbow. When they was done laughing, he looks up at the judge and says—

'Your Honour, there's a thief in this house.'

'A thief?'

'Yes, sir. And he's got them twelve-thousand-dollar di'monds on him.'

By gracious, but it made a stir! Everybody went to shouting—

'Which is him? which is him? pint him out!' And the judge says—

'Point him out, my lad. Sheriff, you will arrest him. Which one is it?'

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

Tom says— 195'

' This late dead man here—Jubiter Dunlap.'

Then there was another thundering let-go of astonishment and excitement ; but Jubiter, which was astonished enough before, was just fairly putrefied with astonishment this time. And he spoke up, about half crying, and says—

' Now, *that's* a lie ! Your Honour, it ain't fair ; I'm plenty bad enough, without that. I done the other things—Brace he put me up to it, and persuaded me, and promised he'd make me rich, some day, and I done it, and I'm sorry I done it, and I wish't I hadn't ; but I hain't stole no di'monds, and I hain't *got* no di'monds ; I wish't I may never stir if it hain't so. The sheriff can search me and see.'

Tom says—

' Your Honour, it wasn't right to call him a thief, and I'll let up on that a little. He did steal the di'monds, but he didn't know it. He stole them from his brother Jake when he was laying dead, after Jake had stolen them from the other thieves ; but Jubiter didn't know he was stealing them ; and he's been swelling around here with them a month ; yes, sir, twelve thousand dollars' worth of di'monds on him—

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

all that riches, and going ,around here every day just like a poor man. Yes, your Honour, he's got them on him now.'

The judge spoke up and says—

' Search him, sheriff.'

Well, sir, the sheriff he ransacked him high and low, and everywhere ; searched his hat, socks, seams, boots, everything—and Tom he stood there quiet, laying for another of them effects of his'n. Finally the sheriff he give it up, and everybody looked disappointed, and Jubiter says—

' There, now ! what 'd I tell you ? '

And the judge says—

' It appears you were mistaken this time, my boy.'

Then Tom he took an attitude, and let on to be studying with all his might, and scratching his head. Then all of a sudden he glanced up chipper and says—

' Oh, now I've got it ! I'd forgot.'

Which was a lie, and I knowed it. Then he says—

' Will somebody be good enough to lend me a little small screw-driver ? There was one in your brother's hand-bag that you smouched,

## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

Jubiter, but I reckon you didn't fetch it with you.

'No, I didn't. I didn't want it, and I give it away.'

'That was because you didn't know what it was for.'

Jubiter had his boots on again by now, and when the thing Tom wanted was passed over the people's heads till it got to him, he says to Jubiter—

'Put up your foot on this chair ;' and he kneeled down and begun to unscrew the heel-plate, everybody watching ; and when he got that big di'mond out of that boot heel and held it up and let it flash and blaze and squirt sunlight everwhichaway, it just took everybody's breath ; and Jubiter he looked so sick and sorry you never see the like of it. And when Tom held up the other di'mond he looked sorrier than ever. Land ! he was thinking how he would a skipped out and been rich and independent in a foreign land if he'd only had the luck to guess what the screw-driver was in the carpet-bag for. Well, it was a most exciting time, take it all around, and Tom got cords of glory. The judge took the di'monds, and

## **TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE**

stood up in his pulpit, and shoved his spectacles back on his head, and cleared his throat, and says——

‘ I’ll keep them and notify the owners ; and when they send for them it will be a real pleasure to me to hand you the two thousand dollars, for you’ve earned the money—yes, and you’ve earned the deepest and most sincerest thanks of this community besides, for lifting a wronged and innocent family out of ruin and shame, and saving a good and honourable man from a felon’s death, and for exposing to infamy and the punishment of the law a cruel and odious scoundrel and his miserable creatures ! ’

Well, sir, if there’d been a brass band to bust out some music, then, it would a been just the perfectest thing I ever see, and Tom Sawyer he said the same.

Then the sheriff he nabbed Brace Dunlap and his crowd, and by-and-by next month the judge had them up for trial and jailed the whole lot. And everybody crowded back to Uncle Silas’s little old church, and was ever so loving and kind to him and the family, and couldn’t do enough for them ; and Uncle Silas he preached them the blamèdest, jumbledest,



## TOM SAWYER, DETECTIVE

idiotic sermons you ever struck, and would tangle you up so you couldn't find your way home in daylight ; but the people never let on but what they thought it was the clearest and brightest and elegantest sermons that ever was ; and they would set there and cry, for love and pity ; but, by George, they give me the jimjams and the fantods, and caked up what brains I had, and turned them solid ; but by-and-by they loved the old man's intellects back into him again, and he was as sound in his skull as ever he was, which ain't no flattery, I reckon. And so the whole family was as happy as birds, and nobody could be gratefuller and lovinger than what they was to Tom Sawyer ; and the same to me, though I hadn't done nothing. And when the two thousand dollars come, Tom give half of it to me, and never told anybody so, which didn't surprise me, because I knowed him.



## **THE CALIFORNIAN'S TALE**



## THE CALIFORNIAN'S TALE

**TWENTY-THREE** years ago I was out prospecting on the Stanislaus, tramping all day long with pick and pan and horn, and washing a hatful of dirt here and there, always expecting to make a rich strike, and never doing it. It was a lovely region, woodsy, balmy, delicious, and had once been populous, long years before, but now the people had vanished and the charming paradise was a solitude. They went away when the surface diggings gave out. In one place, where a busy little city with banks and newspapers and fire companies and a mayor and aldermen had been, was nothing but a wide expanse of emerald turf, with not even the faintest sign that human life had ever been present there. This was down toward Tuttle-town. In the country neighbourhood thereabouts, along the dusty roads, one found at intervals the prettiest little cottage homes, snug.

## THE CALIFORNIAN'S TALE

and cozy, and so cobwebbed with vines snowed thick with roses that the doors and windows were wholly hidden from sight—sign that these were deserted homes, forsaken years ago by defeated and disappointed families who could neither sell them nor give them away. Now and then, half an hour apart, one came across solitary log cabins of the earliest mining days, built by the first gold-miners, the predecessors of the cottage-builders. In some few cases these cabins were still occupied ; and when this was so, you could depend upon it that the occupant was the very pioneer who had built the cabin ; and you could depend on another thing, too—that he was there because he had once had his opportunity to go home to the States rich, and had not done it ; had later lost his wealth, and had then in his humiliation resolved to sever all communication with his home relatives and friends, and be to them thenceforth as one dead. Round about California in that day was scattered a host of these living dead men—pride-smitten poor fellows, grizzled and old at forty, whose secret thoughts were made all of regrets and longings—regrets for their wasted

## THE CALIFORNIAN'S TALE

lives, and longings to be out of the struggle and done with it all.

It was a lonesome land! Not a sound in all those peaceful expanses of grass and woods but the drowsy hum of insects ; no glimpse of man or beast ; nothing to keep up your spirits and make you glad to be alive. And so, at last, in the early part of the afternoon, when I caught sight of a human creature, I felt a most grateful uplift. This person was a man about forty-five years old, and he was standing at the gate of one of those cozy little rose-clad cottages of the sort already referred to. However, this one hadn't a deserted look ; it had the look of being lived in and petted and cared for and looked after ; and so had its front yard, which was a garden of flowers, abundant, gay, and flourishing. I was invited in, of course, and required to make myself at home—it was the custom of the country.

It was delightful to be in such a place, after long weeks of daily and nightly familiarity with miners' cabins—with all which this implies of dirt floor, never-made beds, tin plates and cups, bacon and beans and black coffee, and nothing of ornament but war pictures from the eastern

## THE CALIFORNIAN'S TALE

illustrated papers tacked to the log walls. That was all hard, cheerless, materialistic desolation, but here was a nest which had aspects to rest the tired eye and refresh that something in one's nature which, after long fasting, recognises, when confronted by the belongings of art, howsoever cheap and modest they may be, that it has unconsciously been famishing and now has found nourishment. I could not have believed that a rag carpet could feast me so, and so content me: or that there could be such solace to the soul in wall-paper and framed lithographs, and bright coloured tidies and lamp-mats, and windsor chairs, and varnished what-nots, with sea-shells and books and china vases on them, and the score of little unclassifiable tricks and touches that a woman's hand distributes about a home, which one sees without knowing he sees them, yet would miss in a moment if they were taken away. The delight that was in my heart showed in my face, and the man saw it and was pleased; saw it so plainly that he answered it as if it had been spoken.

'All her work,' he said caressingly; 'she did it all herself—every bit,' and he took the



## THE CALIFORNIAN'S TALE

room in with a glance which was full of affectionate worship. One of those soft Japanese fabrics with which women drape with careful negligence the upper part of a picture-frame was out of adjustment. He noticed it, and rearranged it with cautious pains, stepping back several times to gauge the effect before he got it to suit him. Then he gave it a light finishing pat or two with his hand, and said, 'She always does that. You can't tell just what it lacks, but it does lack something until you've done that—you can see it yourself after it's done, but that is all you know; you can't find out the law of it. It's like the finishing pats a mother gives the child's hair after she's got it combed and brushed, I reckon. I've seen her fix all these things so much that I can do them all just her way, though I don't know the law of any of them. But she knows the law. She knows the why and the how both, but I don't know the why; I only know the how.'

He took me into a bedroom so that I might wash my hands; such a bedroom as I had not seen for years: white counterpane, white pillows, carpeted floor, papered walls, pictures,

## THE CALIFORNIAN'S TALE

dressiug-table, with mirror and pincushion and dainty toilet things ; and in the corner a wash-stand, with real chinaware bowl and pitcher, and with soap in a china dish, and on a rack more than a dozen towels—towels too clean and white for one out of practice to use without some vague sense of profanation. So my face spoke again, and he answered with gratified words :

‘ All her work ; she did it all herself—every bit. Not a thing here that hasn’t felt the touch of her hand. Now you would think—but I mustn’t talk so much.’

By this time I was wiping my hands and glancing from detail to detail of the room’s belongings, as one is apt to do when he is in a new place, where everything he sees is a comfort to his eye and his spirit ; and I became conscious, in one of those unaccountable ways, you know, that there was something there somewhere that the man wanted me to discover for myself. I knew it perfectly, and I knew he was trying to help me by furtive indications with his eye, so I tried hard to get on the right track, being eager to gratify him. I failed several times, as I could see out of the corner

## THE CALIFORNIAN'S TALE

of my eye without being told ; but at last I knew I must be looking straight at the thing—knew it from the pleasure issuing in invisible waves from him. He broke into a happy laugh, and rubbed his hands together, and cried out :

‘That’s it! You’ve found it. I knew you would. It’s her picture.’

I went to the little black-walnut bracket on the further wall, and did find there what I had not yet noticed, a daguerreotype case. It contained the sweetest girlish face, and the most beautiful, as it seemed to me, that I had ever seen. The man drank the admiration from my face, and was fully satisfied.

‘Nineteen her last birthday,’ he said, as he put the picture back ; ‘and that was the day we were married. When you see her—ah, just wait till you see her!’

‘Where is she? When will she be in?’

‘Oh, she’s away now. She’s gone to see her people. They live forty or fifty miles from here. She’s been gone two weeks to-day.’

‘When do you expect her back?’

‘This is Wednesday. She’ll be back

## THE CALIFORNIAN'S TALE

Saturday, in the evening—about nine o'clock, likely.'

I felt a sharp sense of disappointment.

'I'm sorry, because I'll be gone then,' I said regretfully.

'Gone? No—why should you go? Don't go. She'll be so disappointed.'

She would be disappointed—that beautiful creature! If she had said the words herself they could hardly have blessed me more. I was feeling a deep, strong longing to see her; a longing so supplicating, so insistent, that it made me afraid. I said to myself, 'I will go straight away from this place, for my peace of mind's sake.'

'You see, she likes to have people come and stop with us—people who know things, and can talk—people like you. She delights in it; for she knows—oh, she knows nearly everything herself, and can talk, oh, like a bird—and the books she reads, why, you would be astonished. Don't go; it's only a little while, you know, and she'll be so disappointed.'

I heard the words, but hardly noticed them, I was so deep in my thinkings and strugglings. He left me, but I didn't know it. Presently he

## THE CALIFORNIAN'S TALE

was back, with the picture-case in his hand, and he held it open before me and said :

' There, now, tell her to her face you could have stayed to see her, and you wouldn't.'

That second glimpse broke down my good resolution. I would stay and take the risk. That night we smoked the tranquil pipe, and talked till late about various things, but mainly about her ; and certainly I had had no such pleasant and restful time for many a day. The Thursday followed and slipped comfortably away. Toward twilight a big miner from three miles away came—one of the grizzled, stranded pioneers—and gave us warm salutation, clothed in grave and sober speech. Then he said :

' I only just dropped over to ask about the little madam, and when is she coming home. Any news from her?' N A 1, 1 B

' Oh, yes, a letter. Would you like to hear it, Tom?'

' Well, I should think I would, if you don't mind, Henry!'

Henry got the letter out of his wallet, and said he would skip some of the private phrases, if we were willing ; then he went on and read the bulk of it—a loving, sedate, and altogether

## THE CALIFORNIAN'S TALE

charming and gracious piece of handiwork, with a postscript full of affectionate regards and messages to Tom, and Joe, and Charley, and other close friends and neighbours.

As the reader finished, he glanced at Tom, and cried out :

‘Oho, you’re at it again! Take your hands away, and let me see your eyes. You always do that when I read you a letter from her. I’m going to write and tell her.’

‘Oh, no, you mustn’t, Henry. I’m getting old, you know, and any little disappointment makes me want to cry. I thought she’d be here herself, and now you’ve got only a letter.’

‘Well, now, what put that in your head? I thought everybody knew she wasn’t coming till Saturday.’

‘Saturday! Why, come to think, I did know it. I wonder what’s the matter with me lately. Certainly I knew it. Ain’t we all getting ready for her? Well, I must be going now. But I’ll be on hand when she comes, old man!’

Late Friday afternoon another grey veteran tramped over from his cabin a mile or so away, and said the boys wanted to have a little gaiety

## THE CALIFORNIAN'S TALE

and a good time Saturday night, if Henry thought she wouldn't be too tired after her journey to be kept up.

'Tired? She tired! Oh, hear the man! Joe, *you* know she'd sit up six weeks to please any one of you!'

When Joe heard that there was a letter, he asked to have it read, and the loving messages in it for him broke the old fellow all up; but he said he was such an old wreck that *that* would happen to him if she only just mentioned his name. 'Lord, we miss her so!' he said.

Saturday afternoon I found I was taking out my watch pretty often. Henry noticed it, and said with a startled look:

'You don't think she ought to be here so soon, do you?'

I felt caught, and a little embarrassed; but I laughed, and said it was a habit of mine when I was in a state of expectancy. But he didn't seem quite satisfied; and from that time on he began to show uneasiness. Four times he walked me up the road to a point whence we could see a long distance; and there he would stand, shading his eyes with his hand, and looking. Several times he said:

## THE CALIFORNIAN'S TALE

'I'm getting worried, I'm getting right down worried. I know she's not due till about nine o'clock, and yet something seems to be trying to warn me that something 's happened. You don't think anything has happened, do you?'

I began to get pretty thoroughly ashamed of him for his childishness ; and at last, when he repeated that imploring question still another time, I lost my patience for the moment, and spoke pretty brutally to him. It seemed to shrivel him up and cow him ; and he looked so wounded and so humble after that, that I detested myself for having done the cruel and unnecessary thing. And so I was glad when Charley, another veteran, arrived toward the edge of the evening, and nestled up to Henry to hear the letter read, and talk over the preparations for the welcome. Charley fetched out one hearty speech after another, and did his best to drive away his friend's bodings and apprehensions.

'Anything *happened* to her ? Henry, that's pure nonsense. There isn't anything going to happen to her ; just make your mind easy as to that. What did the letter say ? Said she was



## THE CALIFORNIAN'S TALE

‘well, didn’t it? And said she’d be here by nine o’clock, didn’t it? Did you ever know her to fail of her word? Why, you know you never did. Well, then, don’t you fret, she’ll *be* here, and that’s absolutely certain, and as sure as you are born. Come, now, let’s get to decorating ; not much time left.’

Pretty soon Tom and Joe arrived, and then all hands set about adorning the house with flowers. Toward nine the three miners said that as they had brought their instruments they might as well tune up, for the boys and girls would soon be arriving now, and hungry for a good old-fashioned breakdown. A fiddle, a banjo, and a clarinet, these were the instruments. The trio took their places side by side, and began to play some rattling dance-music, and beat time with their big boots.

It was getting very close to nine. Henry was standing in the door with his eyes directed up the road, his body swaying to the torture of his mental distress. He had been made to drink his wife’s health and safety several times, and now Tom shouted :

‘All hands stand by ! One more drink, and she’s here !’

## THE CALIFORNIAN'S TALE

Joe brought the glasses on a waiter, and served the party. I reached for one of the two remaining glasses, but Joe growled, under his breath :

‘ Drop that ! Take the other.’

Which I did. Henry was served last. He had hardly swallowed his drink when the clock began to strike. He listened till it finished, his face growing pale and paler ; then he said :

‘ Boys, I’m sick with fear. Help me—I want to lie down.’

They helped him to the sofa. He began to nestle and drowse ; but presently spoke like one talking in his sleep, and said :

‘ Did I hear horses’ feet ? Have they come ?’

One of the veterans answered, close to his ear :

‘ It was Jimmy Parrish come to say the party got delayed, but they’re right up the road a piece, and coming along. Her horse is lame, but she’ll be here in half an hour.’

‘ Oh, I’m so thankful nothing has happened !’

He was asleep almost before the words were out of his mouth. In a moment those handy

## THE CALIFORNIAN'S TALE

men had his clothes off, and had tucked him into his bed in the chamber where I had washed my hands. They closed the door and came back. Then they seemed preparing to leave ; but I said :

‘ Please, don’t go, gentlemen. She won’t know me ; I am a stranger.’

They glanced at each other. Then Joe said :

‘ She ? Poor thing, she’s been dead nineteen years !’

‘ Dead !’

‘ That, or worse. She went to see her folks half a year after she was married, and on her way back, on a Saturday evening, the Indians captured her within five miles of this place, and she’s never been heard of since.’

‘ And he lost his mind in consequence ?’

‘ Never has been sane an hour since. But he only gets bad when that time of the year comes round. Then we begin to drop in here, three days before she’s due, to encourage him up, and ask if he’s heard from her, and Saturday we all come and fix up the house with flowers, and get everything ready for a dance. We’ve

## THE CALIFORNIAN'S TALE

done it every year for nineteen years. The first Saturday there was twenty-seven of us, without counting the girls ; there's only three of us now, and the girls are all gone. We drug him to sleep, or he would go wild ; then he's all right for another year—thinks she's with him till the last three or four days come round ; then he begins to look for her, and gets out his poor old letter, and we come and ask him to read it to us. Lord, she was a darling !'

# **ADAM'S DIARY**



## ADAM'S DIARY

MONDAY.—This new creature with the long hair is a good deal in the way. It is always hanging around and following me about. I don't like this ; I am not used to company. I wish it would stay with the other animals. . . . Cloudy to-day, wind in the east ; think we shall have rain. . . . *We?* Where did I get that word ? . . . I remember now—the new creature uses it.

*Tuesday.*—Been looking over the estate. The new creature calls it the ' Garden of Eden '—why, I am sure I do not know. Says it *looks* like the Garden of Eden. That is not a reason, it is mere waywardness and imbecility. I get no chance to name anything myself. The new creature names everything that comes along, before I can get in a protest. And always that same pretext is offered—it *looks* like the thing. There is the dodo, for instance. Says the moment one looks at it one sees at a

## ADAM'S DIARY

glance that it 'looks like a dodo.' It will have to keep that name, no doubt. It wearies me to fret about it, and it does no good, anyway. Dodo! It looks no more like a dodo than I do.

*Wednesday.*—Built me a shelter against the rain, but could not have it to myself in peace. The new creature intruded. When I tried to put it out it shed water out of the holes in the front of its head that it looks with, and wiped it away with the back of its paw, and made a piteous noise such as some of the other animals make when they are in distress. I wish it would not talk; it is always talking. That sounds like a cheap fling at the poor creature, a slur; but I do not mean it so. I have never heard the human voice before, and any new and strange sound intruding itself here upon the solemn hush of these dreaming solitudes offends my ear and seems a false note. And this new sound is so close to me; it is right at my shoulder, right at my ear, first on one side and then on the other, and I am used only to sounds that are more or less remote—sounds that rise upon this brooding vast silence out of far distances—voices of Nature, I take it



## ADAM'S DIARY

—moaning of the winds in the woods, the peaceful splash of hidden fountains, the tinkling, faint music that is borne to me in the stillness of the night—from those bright things that glint and sparkle in the sky, I think!

My life is not as happy as it was.

*Saturday.*—The new creature eats too much fruit. We are going to run short, most likely. 'We' again—that is *its* word; mine, too, now, from hearing it so much. Good deal of fog this morning. I do not go out in the fog, myself. The new creature does. It goes out in all weathers, and stumps right in with its muddy feet. And talks. It used to be so pleasant and quiet here.

*Sunday.*—Pulled through. This day is getting to be more and more trying. It was selected and set apart last November as a day of rest. I already had six of them per week before. This is another of those unaccountable things. There seems to be too much legislation, too much fussing, and fixing, and tidying-up, and not enough of the better-let-well-enough-alone policy. [*Mem.*—Must keep that sort of opinions to myself.] This morning found the new creature trying to clod apples out of that

## ADAM'S DIARY

forbidden tree. But it can't hit anything—it throws like—that. I think the apples are safe.

*Monday.*—The new creature says its name is Eve. That is all right, I have no objections. Says it is to call it by when I want it to come. I said it was superfluous, then. The word evidently raised me in its respect; and indeed it is a large, good word and will bear repetition. It says it is not an It, it is a She. This is probably doubtful; yet it is all one to me; what she is were nothing to me if she would but go by herself and keep quiet.

*Saturday.*—I escaped last Tuesday night, and travelled two days, and built me another shelter, in a secluded place, and obliterated my tracks as well as I could, but she hunted me out by means of a beast which she has tamed and calls a wolf, and came making that pitiful noise again, and shedding that water out of the places she looks with. I was obliged to return with her, but will presently emigrate again, when occasion offers. She engages herself in many foolish things: among others, trying to study out why the animals that she calls lions and tigers live on grass and flowers, when, as

## ADAM'S DIARY

she says, the sort of teeth they wear would indicate that they were intended to eat each other. This is foolish, because to do that would be to kill each other, and that would introduce what, as I understand it, is called 'death'; and death, as I have been told, has not yet entered the world. Which is a pity, on some accounts.

*Sunday*.—Pulled through.

*Monday*.—I believe I see what the week is for: it is to give time to rest up from the weariness of Sunday. It seems a good idea, in a region where good ideas are rather conspicuously scarce. [*Mem.*—Must keep this sort of remarks private.] . . . She has been climbing that tree again. Clodded her out of it. She said nobody was looking. Seems to consider that a sufficient justification for chancing any dangerous thing. Told her that. The word justification moved her admiration—and envy, too, I thought. It is a good word.

*Thursday*.—She told me she was made out of a rib taken from my body. This is at least doubtful, if not more than that. I have not missed any rib. . . . She is in much trouble about the buzzard; says grass does not agree

## ADAM'S DIARY

with it ; is afraid she can't raise it ; thinks it was intended to live on decayed flesh. The buzzard must get along the best it can with what is provided. We cannot overturn the whole scheme to accommodate the buzzard.

*Saturday.*—She fell in the pond yesterday, when she was looking at herself in it, which she is always doing. She nearly strangled, and said it was most uncomfortable. This made her sorry for the creatures which live in there, which she calls fishes, for she continues to fasten names on to things that don't need them and don't come when they are called by them, which is a matter of no consequence to her, she is such a fool anyway ; so she got a lot of them out and brought them in and put them in my bed to keep them warm, but I have noticed them now and then all day and I don't see that they are any happier there than they were before in the water. When night comes I shall throw them outdoors. I won't sleep with them, for I find them clammy and unpleasant to lie among when a person hasn't anything on.

*Sunday.*—Pulled through.

*Tuesday.*—She has taken up with a snake, now. The other animals are glad, for she was

## ADAM'S DIARY

always experimenting with them and bothering them ; and I am glad, because the snake talks ; and this enables me to get a rest.

*Friday.*—She says the snake advises her to try the fruit of that tree, and says the result will be a great and fine and noble education. I told her there would be another result, too—it would introduce death into the world. That was a mistake—it had been better to keep the remark to myself ; it only gave her an idea—she could save the sick buzzard, and furnish fresh meat to the despondent lions and tigers. I advised her to keep away from the tree. She said she wouldn't. I foresee trouble. Will emigrate.

*Wednesday.*— I have had a variegated time. I escaped that night, and rode a horse all night as fast as he could go, hoping to get clear out of the Garden and hide in some other country before the trouble should begin ; but it was not to be. About an hour after sun-up, as I was riding through a flowery plain where thousands of animals were grazing, slumbering, or playing with each other, according to their common wont, all of a sudden they broke into a tempest of frightful noises, and in one moment the

## ADAM'S DIARY

plain was a frantic commotion as far as the eye could reach, and every beast was destroying its neighbour. I knew what it meant—Eve had eaten that fruit, and death was come into the world. . . . The tigers ate my horse, paying no attention when I ordered them to desist, and they would even have eaten me if I had stayed—which I didn't. . . . I found this place, outside the Garden, and was fairly comfortable for a few days, but she has found me out. In fact, I was not sorry she came, for there are but meagre pickings here, and she brought some of those apples. I was obliged to eat them, I was so hungry. It was against my principles, but I find that principles have no real force except when one is well fed. . . . She came curtained in boughs and bunches of leaves, and when I asked her what she meant by such nonsense, and snatched them away and threw them down, she tittered and blushed. I had never seen a person titter and blush before, and to me it seemed unbecoming and idiotic. She said I would soon know how it was myself. This was correct. Hungry as I was, I laid down the apple half eaten—certainly the best one I ever saw, considering the lateness of the

## ADAM'S DIARY

season—and arrayed myself in the discarded boughs and branches, and then spoke to her with some severity and ordered her to go and get some more and not make such a spectacle of herself. She did it, and after this we crept down to where the wild-beast battle had been, and collected some skins, and I made her patch together a couple of suits proper for public occasions. They are uncomfortable, it is true, but stylish, and that is the main point about clothes. . . . I find she is a good deal of a companion. I see I should be lonesome and depressed without her, now that I have lost my property. Another thing; she says it is ordered that we work for our living hereafter. She will be useful. I will superintend.

*Ten days later.*—She accuses *me* of being partly the cause of our disaster! I like that!

*Next year.*—We have named it Cain. She caught it while I was up country trapping; caught it in the timber a couple of miles from our dug-out—or it might have been four, she isn't certain which. It resembles us in some ways, and may be a relation. That is what she thinks, but this is an error, in my judgment. The difference in size warrants

## ADAM'S DIARY

the conclusion that it is a different and new kind of animal—a fish, perhaps, though when I dumped it in the water to see, it sank, and she plunged in and snatched it out before there was a chance for the experiment to determine the matter. I still think it is a fish, but she is indifferent about what it is, and won't let me have it to try. I do not understand this. The coming of the creature seems to have changed her whole nature and made her unreasonable about experiments. She thinks more of it than she does of any of the other animals, but is not able to explain why. Her mind is disordered—everything shows it. Sometimes she carries this fish in her arms half the night when it complains and wants to get to the water. At such times the water comes out of the places in her face that she looks out of, and she pats the fish on the back and makes soft sounds with her mouth to soothe it, and betrays sorrow and solicitude in a hundred ways. I have never seen her do like this with any other fish, and it troubles me greatly. She used to carry the young tigers around so, and play with them, before we lost our property, but it was only play ; she never took on about



## ADAM'S DIARY

them like this when their dinner disagreed with them.

*Sunday.*—She don't work, Sundays, but lies around all tired out with her week's digging and hoeing, and likes to have the fish wallow over her ; and she makes fool noises to amuse it, and pretends to chew its paws, and that makes it laugh. I've never seen a fish before that could laugh. This makes me doubt . . . I have come to like Sunday myself. Superintending all the week tires a body so. There ought to be more Sundays. In the old days they were tough, but now they come handy.

*Wednesday.*—It isn't a fish. I cannot quite make out what it is. It makes curious devilish noises when not satisfied ; and when it is, says 'goo-goo.' It is not one of us, for it doesn't walk ; it is not a bird, for it doesn't fly ; it is not a frog, for it doesn't hop ; it is not a snake, for it doesn't crawl ; I feel reasonably sure it is not a fish, though I cannot get a chance to find out whether it can swim or not. It merely wallows around, and mostly on its back, with its feet up. I have not seen any other animal do that before. I said I believed it was an enigma ; but she only admired the word without

## ADAM'S DIARY

understanding it. In my judgment it is either an enigma or some kind of a bug. If it dies, I will take it apart and examine its works. I never had a thing perplex me so.

*Three months later.*—The perplexity merely augments instead of diminishing. I sleep but little. It has ceased from lying around, and goes about on its four legs now. Yet it differs from the other four-legged animals, in that its front legs are unusually short, consequently this causes the main part of its person to stick up uncomfortably high in the air, and this is not attractive. It is built much as we are, but its method of travelling shows that it is not of our breed. The short front legs and long hind ones indicate that it is of the kangaroo family, but it is a marked variation of the species, since the true kangaroo hops, whereas this one never does. Still it is a curious and interesting variety, and has not been catalogued before. As I discovered it, I have felt justified in securing the credit of the discovery by attaching my name to it, and hence have called it *Kangaroorum Adamiensis*. . . . It must have been a young one when it came, for it has grown exceedingly since. It must be five times as big

## ADAM'S DIARY

now as it was then, and when discontented is able to make from twenty-two to thirty-eight times the noise it made at first. Coercion does not modify this, but has the contrary effect. For this reason I discontinued the system. She reconciles it by persuasion, and by giving it things which she had told it she wouldn't give it before. As observed previously, I was not at home when it first came, and she told me she found it in the woods. It seems odd that it should be the only one, yet it must be so, for I have worn myself out these many weeks trying to find another one to add to my collection, and for this one to play with ; for surely then it would be quieter and we could tame it more easily. Put I find none, nor any vestige of any ; and, strangest of all, no tracks. It has to live on the ground, it cannot help itself ; therefore, how does it get about without leaving a track ? I have set a dozen traps, but they do no good. I catch all small animals except that one ; animals that merely go into the trap out of curiosity, I think, to see what the milk is there for. They never drink it.

*Three months later.*—The kangaroo still continues to grow, which is very strange and

## ADAM'S DIARY

**Complexing.** I never knew one to be so long getting its growth. It has fur on its head now ; not like kangaroo fur, but exactly like our hair except that it is much finer and softer, and instead of being black is red. I am like to lose my mind over the capricious and harassing developments of this unclassifiable zoological freak. If I could catch another one—but that is hopeless ; it is a new variety, and the only sample ; this is plain. But I caught a true kangaroo and brought it in, thinking that this one, being lonesome, would rather have that for company than no kin at all, or any animal it could feel a nearness to or get sympathy from, in its forlorn condition here among strangers who do not know its ways or habits, or what to do to make it feel that it is among friends ; but it was a mistake—it went into such fits at the sight of the kangaroo that I was convinced it had never seen one before. I pity the poor noisy little animal, but there is nothing I can do to make it happy. If I could only tame it—but that is out of the question ; the more I try the worse I seem to make it. It grieves me to the heart to see it in its little storms of sorrow and passion. I wanted to

## ADAM'S DIARY

let it go, but she wouldn't hear of it. That seemed cruel and hard-hearted, and not like her; and yet she may be right. It might be lonelier than ever; for since I cannot find another one, how could it?

*Five months later.*—It is not a kangaroo. No, for it supports itself by holding to her finger, and thus goes a few steps on its hind legs, and then falls down. It is probably some kind of a bear; and yet it hasn't any tail—as yet—and no fur, except on its head. It still keeps on growing—that is a curious circumstance, for bears get their growth earlier than this. Bears are dangerous—since our catastrophe—and I shall not be satisfied to have this one prowling about the place much longer without a muzzle on. I have offered to get her a kangaroo if she would let this one go, but it did no good—she is determined to run us into all sorts of foolish risks, I think. She was not like this before she lost her mind.

*A fortnight later.*—I examined its mouth. There is no danger yet; it has only one tooth. It hasn't any tail yet. It makes more noise now than it ever did before—and mainly at night. I have moved out. But I shall go

## ADAM'S DIARY

over, mornings, to breakfast, and to see if it has more teeth. If it gets a mouthful of teeth it will be time for it to go, tail or no tail ; for a bear does not need a tail in order to be dangerous.

*Four months later.*—I have been off hunting and fishing a month. Meantime the bear has learned to paddle around all by itself on its hind legs, and says 'poppa' and 'momma.' It is certainly a new species. This resemblance to words may be purely accidental, of course, and may have no purpose or meaning ; but even in that case it is still extraordinary, and is a thing which no other bear can do. This imitation of speech, taken together with general absence of fur and entire absence of tail, sufficiently indicates that this is a new kind of bear. The further study of it will be exceedingly interesting. Meantime I will go off on a far expedition among the forests of the north and make an exhaustive search. There must certainly be another one somewhere, and this one will be less dangerous when it has company of its own species. I will go straightway ; but I will muzzle this one first.

*Three months later.*—It has been a weary,

## ADAM'S DIARY

weary hunt, yet I have had no success. In the meantime, without stirring from the home estate, she has caught another one! I never saw such luck. I might have hunted these woods a hundred years, I never would have run across that thing.

*Three months later.*—I have been comparing the new one with the old one, and it is perfectly plain that they are the same breed. She calls the new one *Abel*. I was going to stuff one of them for my collection, but she is prejudiced against it for some reason or other ; so I have relinquished the idea, though I think it is a mistake. It would be an irreparable loss to science if they should get away. The old one is tamer than it was, and can laugh and talk like a parrot, having learned this, no doubt, from being with the parrot so much, and having the imitative faculty in a highly developed degree. I shall be astonished if it turns out to be a new kind of parrot ; and yet I ought not to be astonished, for it has already been everything else it could think of, since those first days when it was a fish. The new one is as ugly now as the old one was at first ; has the same sulphur-and-raw-meat complexion, and

## ADAM'S DIARY

the same singular head without any fur on it.

*Ten years later.*—They are boys ; we found it out long ago. It was their coming in that small, immature shape that fooled us ; we were not used to it. There are some girls now. Abel is a good boy, but if Cain had stayed a bear it would have improved him. After all these years, I see that I was mistaken about Eve in the beginning ; it is better to live outside the Garden with her than inside it without her. At first I thought she talked too much ; but now I should be sorry to have that voice fall silent and pass out of my life. Blessed be the disaster that brought us near together and taught me to know the goodness of her heart and the sweetness of her spirit.



# **HOW TO TELL A STORY**



# HOW TO TELL A STORY

## THE HUMOROUS STORY AN AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT—ITS DIFFERENCE FROM COMIC AND WITTY STORIES

I do not claim that I can tell a story as it ought to be told. I only claim to know how a story ought to be told, for I have been almost daily in the company of expert story-tellers for many years.

There are several kinds of stories, but only one difficult kind—the humorous. I will talk mainly about that one. The humorous story is American, the comic story is English, the witty story is French. The humorous story depends for its effect upon the *manner* of the telling; the comic story and the witty story upon the *matter*.

The humorous story may be spun out to great length, and may wander around as much as it pleases, and arrive nowhere in particular ;

## HOW TO TELL A STORY

but the comic and witty stories must be brief and end with a point. The humorous story bubbles gently along, the others burst.

The humorous story is strictly a work of art—high and delicate art—and only an artist can tell it ; but no art is necessary in telling the comic and the witty story ; anybody can do it. The art of telling a humorous story—understand, I mean by word of mouth, not print—was created in America, and has remained at home.

The humorous story is told gravely ; the teller does his best to conceal the fact that he even dimly suspects that there is anything funny about it ; but the teller of the comic story tells you beforehand that it is one of the funniest things he has ever heard, then tells it with eager delight, and is the first person to laugh when he gets through. And sometimes, if he has had good success, he is so glad and happy that he will repeat the ' nub ' of it and glance around from face to face, collecting applause, and then repeat it again. It is a pathetic thing to see.

Very often, of course, the rambling and disjointed humorous story finishes with a nub, point, snapper, or whatever you like to call it.

## HOW TO TELL A STORY

Then the listener must be alert, for in many cases the teller will divert attention from that nub by dropping it in a carefully casual and indifferent way, with the pretence that he does not know it is a nub.

Artemus Ward used that trick a good deal ; then when the belated audience presently caught the joke he would look up with innocent surprise, as if wondering what they had found to laugh at. Dan Setchell used it before him, Nye and Riley and others use it to-day.

But the teller of the comic story does not slur the nub ; he shouts it at you—every time. And when he prints it, in England, France, Germany, and Italy, he italicises it, puts some whooping exclamation-points after it, and sometimes explains it in a parenthesis. All of which is very depressing, and makes one want to renounce joking and lead a better life.

Let me set down an instance of the comic method, using an anecdote which has been popular all over the world for twelve or fifteen hundred years. The teller tells it in this way :

# HOW TO TELL A STORY

## THE WOUNDED SOLDIER

In the course of a certain battle, a soldier whose leg had been shot off appealed to another soldier who was hurrying by to carry him to the rear, informing him at the same time of the loss which he had sustained ; whereupon the generous son of Mars, shouldering the unfortunate, proceeded to carry out his desire. The bullets and cannon-balls were flying in all directions, and presently one of the latter took the wounded man's head off—without, however, his deliverer being aware of it. In no long time he was hailed by an officer, who said :

‘ Where are you going with that carcase ? ’

‘ To the rear, sir—he's lost his leg ! ’

‘ His leg, forsooth ? ’ responded the astonished officer ; ‘ you mean his head, you booby.’

Whereupon the soldier dispossessed himself of his burden, and stood looking down upon it in great perplexity. At length he said :

‘ It is true, sir, just as you have said.’ ‘ Then after a pause he added, ‘ *But he* TOLD me IT WAS HIS LEG !!! ’

Here the narrator bursts into explosion after

## HOW TO TELL A STORY

explosion of thunderous laughter, repeating that nub from time to time through his gaspings and shriekings and suffocatings.

It takes only a minute and a half to tell that in its comic-story form ; and isn't worth the telling, after all. Put into the humorous-story form it takes ten minutes, and is about the funniest thing I have ever listened to—as James Whitcomb Riley tells it.

He tells it in the character of a dull-witted old farmer, who has just heard it for the first time, thinks it is unspeakably funny, and is trying to repeat it to a neighbour. But he can't remember it ; so he gets it all mixed up and wanders helplessly round and round, putting in tedious details that don't belong in the tale and only retard it ; taking them out conscientiously and putting in others that are just as useless ; making minor mistakes now and then and stopping to correct them and explain how he came to make them ; remembering things which he forgot to put in in their proper place and going back to put them in there ; stopping his narrative a good while in order to try to recall the name of the soldier that was hurt, and finally remembering that the soldier's name was not

## HOW TO TELL A STORY

mentioned, and remarking placidly that the name is of no real importance, any way—better, of course, if one knew it, but not essential, after all—and so on, and so on, and so on.

The teller is innocent and happy and pleased with himself, and has to stop every little while to hold himself in and keep from laughing outright ; and does hold in, but his body quakes in a jelly-like way with interior chuckles ; and at the end of the ten minutes the audience have laughed until they are exhausted, and the tears are running down their faces.

The simplicity and innocence and sincerity and unconsciousness of the old farmer are perfectly simulated, and the result is a performance which is thoroughly charming and delicious. This is art—and fine and beautiful, and only a master can compass it ; but a machine could tell the other story.

To string incongruities and absurdities together in a wandering and sometimes purposeless way, and seem innocently unaware that they are absurdities, is the basis of the American art, if my position is correct. Another feature is the slurring of the point. A third is the dropping of a studied remark apparently



## HOW TO TELL A STORY

without knowing it, as if one were thinking aloud. The fourth and last is the pause.

Artemus Ward dealt in numbers three and four a good deal. He would begin to tell with great animation something which he seemed to think was wonderful ; then lose confidence, and after an apparently absent-minded pause add an incongruous remark in a soliloquising way ; and that was the remark intended to explode the mine—and it did.

For instance, he would say eagerly, excitedly, 'I once knew a man in New Zealand who hadn't a tooth in his head'—here his animation would die out ; a silent, reflective pause would follow ; then he would say dreamily, and as if to himself, 'and yet that man could beat a drum better than any man I ever saw.'

The pause is an exceedingly important feature in any kind of story, and a frequently recurring feature, too. It is a dainty thing, and delicate, and also uncertain and treacherous ; for it must be exactly the right length—no more, and no less—or it fails of its purpose and makes trouble. If the pause is too short the impressive point is passed, and the audience have had time to divine that a surprise is

## HOW TO TELL A STORY

intended—and then you can't surprise them, of course.

On the platform I used to tell a negro ghost story that had a pause in front of the snapper on the end, and that pause was the most important thing in the whole story. If I got it the right length precisely, I could spring the finishing ejaculation with effect enough to make some impressible girl deliver a startled little yelp and jump out of her seat—and that was what I was after. This story was called 'The Golden Arm,' and was told in this fashion. You can practise with it yourself—and mind you look out for the pause and get it right.

### THE GOLDEN ARM

Once 'pon a time dey wuz a monsus mean man, en he live 'way out in de prairie all 'lone by hisself, 'cep'n he had a wife. En bimeby she died, en he tuck en toted her way out dah in de prairie en buried her. Well, she had a golden arm—all solid gold, fum de shoulder down. He wuz pow'ful mean—pow'ful; en dat night he couldn't sleep, caze he want dat golden arm so bad.

## HOW TO TELL A STORY

When it come midnight he couldn't stan' it no mo' ; so he git up, he did, en tuck his lantern en shoved out thoo de storm en dug her up en got de golden arm ; en he bent his head down 'gin de win', en plowed en plowed en plowed thoo de snow. Den all on a sudden he stop (make a considerable pause here, and look startled, and take a listening attitude) en say : ' My *lan*', what's dat ? '

En he listen—en listen—en de win' say (set your teeth together and imitate the wailing and wheezing singsong of the wind), ' Bzzz-z-zzz ' —en den, way back yonder whah de grave is, he hear a *voice* !—he hear a voice all mix' up in de win'—can't hardly tell 'em 'part—' Bzzz-zzz —W-h-o—g-o-t—m-y—g-o-l-d-e-n *arm* ?—zzz —zzz—W-h-o g-o-t m-y g-o-l-d-e-n *arm* ? ' (You must begin to shiver violently now.)

En he begin to shiver en shake, en say, ' Oh, my ! *Oh*, my *lan* ! ' en de win' blow de lantern out, en de snow en sleet blōw in his face en mos' choke him, en he start a-plowin knee-deep toward home mos' dead, he so sk'yerd—en pooty soon he hear de voice agin, en (pause) it 'us comin' *after* him ! ' Bzzz—zzz—zzz—W-h-o —g-o-t—m-y—g-o-l-d-e-n—*arm* ? '

## HOW TO TELL A STORY

When he git to de pasture he hear it agin—closter now, en a-*comin'*!—a-*comin'* back dah in de dark en de storm—(repeat the wind and the voice). When he git to de house he rush upstairs en jump in de bed en kiver up, head and years, en lay dah shiverin' en shakin'—en den way out dah he hear it *agin*!—en a-*comin'*! En bimeby he hear (pause—awed, listening attitude)—pat—pat—pat—*hit's a-comin' upstairs*! Den he hear de latch, en he *know* it's in de room!

Den pooty soon he know it's a-*stannin' by de bed*! (Pause.) Den—he know it's a-*bend-in' down over him*—en he cain't skasely git his breath! Den—den—he seem to feel someth'n *c-o-l-d*, right down 'most agin his head! (Pause.)

Den de voice say, *right at his year*—'W-h-o—g-o-t—m-y—g-o-l-d-e-n arm?' (You must wail it out very plaintively and accusingly; then you stare steadily and impressively into the face of the farthest-gone auditor—a girl, preferably,—and let that awe-inspiring pause begin to build itself in the deep hush. When it has reached exactly the right length, jump suddenly at that girl and yell, 'You've got it!')

If you've got the *pause* right, she'll fetch a

## HOW TO TELL A STORY

dear little yelp and spring right out of her shoes. But you *must* get the pause right ; and you will find it the most troublesome and aggravating and uncertain thing you ever undertook.)



## **MENTAL TELEGRAPHY AGAIN**





## MENTAL TELEGRAPHY AGAIN\*

I HAVE three or four curious incidents to tell about. They seem to come under the head of what I named 'Mental Telegraphy' in a paper written seventeen years ago, and published long afterward.

Several years ago I made a campaign on the platform with Mr. George W. Cable. In Montreal we were honoured with a reception. It began at two in the afternoon in a long drawing-room in the Windsor Hotel. Mr. Cable and I stood at one end of this room, and the ladies and gentlemen entered it at the other end, crossed it at that end, then came up the long left-hand side, shook hands with us, said a word or two, and passed on, in the usual way. My sight is of the telescopic sort, and I presently recognised a familiar face among the

\* See also 'Mental Telegraphy: a Manuscript with a History,' in the volume entitled *The £1,000,000 Bank-note, etc.*, by Mark Twain, pp. 41-75.

## MENTAL TELEGRAPHY AGAIN

throng of strangers drifting in at the distant door, and I said to myself, with surprise and high gratification, 'That is Mrs. R. ; I had forgotten that she was a Canadian.' She had been a great friend of mine in Carson City, Nevada, in the early days. I had not seen her or heard of her for twenty years ; I had not been thinking about her ; there was nothing to suggest her to me, nothing to bring her to my mind ; in fact, to me she had long ago ceased to exist, and had disappeared from my consciousness. But I knew her instantly ; and I saw her so clearly that I was able to note some of the particulars of her dress, and did note them, and they remained in my mind. I was impatient for her to come. In the midst of the handshakings I snatched glimpses of her and noted her progress with the slow-moving file across the end of the room, then I saw her start up the side, and this gave me a full front view of her face. I saw her last when she was within twenty-five feet of me. For an hour I kept thinking she must still be in the room somewhere and would come at last, but I was disappointed.

When I arrived in the lecture-hall that

## MENTAL TELEGRAPHY AGAIN

evening some one said : ' Come into the waiting-room ; there's a friend of yours there who wants to see you. You'll not be introduced—you are to do the recognising without help if you can.'

I said to myself, ' It is Mrs. R. ; I shan't have any trouble.'

There were perhaps ten ladies present, all seated. In the midst of them was Mrs. R., as I had expected. She was dressed exactly as she was when I had seen her in the afternoon. I went forward and shook hands with her and called her by name and said :

' I knew you the moment you appeared at the reception this afternoon.'

She looked surprised, and said : ' But I was not at the reception. I have just arrived from Quebec, and have not been in town an hour.'

It was my turn to be surprised now. I said : ' I can't help it. I give you my word of honour that it is as I say. I saw you at the reception and you were dressed precisely as you are now. When they told me a moment ago that I should find a friend in this room, your image rose before me, dress and all, just as I had seen you at the reception.'

## MENTAL TELEGRAPHY AGAIN

Those are the facts. She was not at the reception at all, or anywhere near it : but I saw her there nevertheless, and most clearly and unmistakably. To that I could make oath. How is one to explain this? I was not thinking of her at the time ; had not thought of her for years. But she had been thinking of me, no doubt : did her thought flit through leagues of air to me, and bring with it that clear and pleasant vision of herself? I think so. That was and remains my sole experience in the matter of apparitions—I mean apparitions that come when one is (ostensibly) awake. I could have been asleep for a moment ; the apparition could have been the creature of a dream. Still, that is nothing to the point ; the feature of interest is the happening of the thing just at that time, instead of at an earlier or later time, which is argument that its origin lay in thought-transference.

My next incident will be set aside by most persons as being merely a 'coincidence,' I suppose. Years ago I used to think sometimes of making a lecturing trip through the antipodes and the borders of the Orient, but always gave up the idea, partly because of the great length

## MENTAL TELEGRAPHY AGAIN

of the journey and partly because my wife could not well manage to go with me. Toward the end of last January that idea, after an interval of years, came suddenly into my head again—forcefully, too, and without any apparent reason. Whence came it? What suggested it? I will touch upon that presently.

I was at that time where I am now—in Paris. I wrote at once to Henry M. Stanley (London) and asked him some questions about his Australian lecture tour, and inquired who had conducted him and what were the terms. After a day or two his answer came. It began :

‘The lecture agent for Australia and New Zealand is *par excellence* Mr. R. S. Smythe of Melbourne.’

He added his itinerary, terms, sea expenses, and some other matters, and advised me to write Mr. Smythe, which I did—February 3rd. I began my letter by saying in substance that while he did not know me personally we had a mutual friend in Stanley, and that would answer for an introduction. Then I proposed my trip, and asked if he would give me the same terms which he had given Stanley.

## MENTAL TELEGRAPHY AGAIN

I mailed my letter to Mr. Smythe February 6th, and *three days later* I got a letter from the self-same Smythe, dated Melbourne, December 17th. I would as soon have expected to get a letter from the late George Washington. The letter began somewhat as mine to him had begun—with a self-introduction :

‘Dear Mr. Clemens,—It is so long since Archibald Forbes and I spent that pleasant afternoon in your comfortable house at Hartford that you have probably quite forgotten the occasion.’

In the course of his letter this occurs :

‘I am willing to give you’ [here he named the terms which he had given Stanley] ‘for an antipodean tour to last, say, nine months.’

Here was the single essential detail of my letter answered three days after I had mailed my inquiry. I might have saved myself the trouble and the postage—and a few years ago I would have done that very thing, for I would have argued that my sudden and strong impulse to write and ask some questions of a stranger on the under side of the globe meant that the impulse came from that stranger, and that he

## MENTAL TELEGRAPHY AGAIN

would answer my questions of his own motion if I would let him alone.

Mr. Smythe's letter probably passed under my nose on its way to lose three weeks travelling to America and back, and gave me a whiff of its contents as it went along. Letters often act like that. Instead of the *thought* coming to you in an instant from Australia, the (apparently) unsentient letter imparts it to you as it glides invisibly past your elbow in the mail-bag.

Next incident. In the following month—March—I was in America. I spent a Sunday at Irvington-on-the-Hudson with Mr. John Brisben Walker, of the *Cosmopolitan* magazine. We came into New York next morning, and went to the Century Club for luncheon. He said some praiseful things about the character of the club and the orderly serenity and pleasantness of its quarters, and asked if I had never tried to acquire membership in it. I said I had not, and that New York clubs were a continuous expense to the country members without being of frequent use or benefit to them.

‘And now I’ve got an idea!’ said I. ‘There’s

## MENTAL TELEGRAPHY AGAIN

the Lotos—the first New York club I was ever a member of—my very earliest love in that line. I have been a member of it for considerably more than twenty years, yet have seldom had a chance to look in and see the boys. They turn grey and grow old while I am not watching. And *my dues go on*. I am going to Hartford this afternoon for a day or two, but as soon as I get back I will go to John Elderkin very privately and say: "Remember the veteran and confer distinction upon him, for the sake of old times. Make me an honorary member and abolish the tax. If you haven't any such thing as honorary membership, all the better—create it for my honour and glory." That would be a great thing; I will go to John Elderkin as soon as I get back from Hartford.'

I took the last express that afternoon, first telegraphing Mr. F. G. Whitmore to come and see me next day. When he came he asked:

'Did you get a letter from Mr. John Elderkin, secretary of the Lotos Club, before you left New York?'

'No.'

'Then it just missed you. If I had known



## MENTAL TELEGRAPHY AGAIN

you were coming I would have kept it. It is beautiful, and will make you proud. The Board of Directors, by unanimous vote, have made you a life member, and *sqvelched those dues*; and you are to be on hand and receive your distinction on the night of the 30th, which is the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the club, and it will not surprise me if they have some great times there.'

. What put the honorary membership in my head that day in the Century Club? for I had never thought of it before. I don't know what brought the thought to me at *that* particular time instead of earlier, but I am well satisfied that it originated with the Board of Directors, and had been on its way to my brain through the air ever since the moment that saw their vote recorded.

Another incident. I was in Hartford two or three days as a guest of the Rev. Joseph H. Twichell. I have held the rank of Honorary Uncle to his children for a quarter of a century, and I went out with him in the trolley-car to visit one of my nieces, who is at Miss Porter's famous school in Farmington. The distance is eight or nine miles. On the way, talking, I

## MENTAL TELEGRAPHY AGAIN

illustrated something with an anecdote. This is the anecdote :

Two years and a half ago I and the family arrived at Milan on our way to Rome, and stopped at the Continental. After dinner I went below and took a seat in the stone-paved court, where the customary lemon-trees stand in the customary tubs, and said to myself, ' Now *this* is comfort, comfort and repose, and nobody to disturb it ; I do not know anybody in Milan.'

Then a young gentleman stepped up and shook hands, which damaged my theory. He said, in substance :

' You won't remember me, Mr. Clemens, but I remember you very well. I was a cadet at West Point when you and Rev. Joseph H. Twichell came there some years ago and talked to us on a Hundredth Night. I am a lieutenant in the regular army now, and my name is H. I am in Europe, all alone, for a modest little tour ; my regiment is in Arizona.'

We became friendly and sociable, and in the course of the talk he told me of an adventure which had befallen him—about to this effect :

## MENTAL TELEGRAPHY AGAIN

I was at Bellagio, stopping at the big hotel there, and ten days ago I lost my letter of credit. I did not know what in the world to do. I was a stranger; I knew no one in Europe; I hadn't a penny in my pocket; I couldn't even send a telegram to London to get my lost letter replaced; my hotel bill was a week old, and the presentation of it imminent—so imminent that it could happen at any moment now. I was so frightened that my wits all seemed to leave me. I tramped and tramped, back and forth, like a crazy person. If anybody approached me I hurried away, for no matter what a person looked like, I took him for the head-waiter with the bill.

'I was at last in such a desperate state that I was ready to do any wild thing that promised even the shadow of help, and so this is the insane thing that I did. I saw a family lunching at a small table on the verandah, and recognised their nationality—Americans—father, mother, and several young daughters—young, tastefully dressed, and pretty—the rule with our people. I went straight there in my civilian costume, named my name, said I was a lieutenant in the army, and told my story and asked for help.

## MENTAL TELEGRAPHY AGAIN

‘What do you suppose the gentleman did? But you would not guess in twenty years. He took out a handful of gold coin and told me to help myself—freely. That is what he did.’

The next morning the lieutenant told me his new letter of credit had arrived in the night, so we strolled to Cook’s to draw money to pay back the benefactor with. We got it, and then went strolling through the great arcade. Presently he said, ‘Yonder they are; come and be introduced.’ I was introduced to the parents and the young ladies, then we separated, and I never saw him or them any m——’

‘Here we are at Farmington,’ said Twichell, interrupting.

We left the trolley-car and tramped through the mud a hundred yards or so to the school, talking about the time we and Warner walked out there years ago, and the pleasant time we had.

We had a visit with my niece in the parlour; then started for the trolley again. Outside the house we encountered a double rank of twenty or thirty of Miss Porter’s young ladies arriving from a walk, and we stood aside, ostensibly to let them have room to file past, but really to

## MENTAL TELEGRAPHY AGAIN

look at them. Presently one of them stepped out of the rank and said :

‘ You don’t know me, Mr. Twichell, but I know your daughter, and that gives me the privilege of shaking hands with you.’

Then she put out her hand to me, and said :

‘ And I wish to shake hands with you too, Mr. Clemens. You don’t remember me, but you were introduced to me in the arcade in Milan two years and a half ago by Lieutenant H.’

What had put that story into my head after all that stretch of time ? Was it just the proximity of that young girl, or was it merely an odd accident ?



## **WHAT PAUL BOURGET THINKS OF US**





## WHAT PAUL BOURGET THINKS OF US

HE reports the American joke correctly. In Boston they ask, How much does he know? in New York, How much is he worth? in Philadelphia, Who were his parents? And when an alien observer turns his telescope upon us—advertisedly in our own special interest—a natural apprehension moves us to ask, What is the diameter of his reflector?

I take a great interest in M. Bourget's chapters, for I know by the newspapers that there are several Americans who are expecting to get a whole education out of them; several who foresaw, and also foretold, that our long night was over, and a light almost divine about to break upon the land.

*'His utterances concerning us are bound to be weighty and well-timed.'*

*'He gives us an object-lesson which should be thoughtfully and profitably studied.'*

## WHAT PAUL BOURGET

These well-considered and important verdicts were of a nature to restore public confidence, which had been disquieted by questionings as to whether so young a teacher would be qualified to take so large a class as 70,000,000, distributed over so extensive a schoolhouse as America, and pull it through without assistance.

I was even disquieted myself, although I am of a cold, calm temperament and not easily disturbed. I feared for my country. And I was not wholly tranquillised by the verdicts rendered as above. It seemed to me that there was still room for doubt. In fact, in looking the ground over I became more disturbed than I was before. Many worrying questions came up in my mind. Two were prominent. Where had the teacher gotten his equipment? What was his method?

He had gotten his equipment in France.

Then as to his method: I saw by his own intimations that he was an Observer, and had a System—that used by naturalists and other scientists. The naturalist collects many bugs and reptiles and butterflies, and studies their ways a long time patiently. By this means he

## THINKS OF US

is presently able to group these creatures into families and subdivisions of families by nice shadings of differences observable in their characters. Then he labels all those shaded bugs and things with nicely descriptive group names, and is now happy, for his great work is completed, and as a result he intimately knows every bug and shade of a bug there, inside and out. It may be true, but a person who was not a naturalist would feel safer about it if he had the opinion of the bug. I think it is a pleasant System, but subject to error.

The Observer of Peoples has to be a Classifier, a Grouper, a Deducer, a Generaliser, a Psychologiser; and first and last, a Thinker. He has to be all these, and when he is at home, observing his own folk, he is often able to prove competency. But history has shown that when he is abroad, observing unfamiliar peoples, the chances are heavily against him. He is then a naturalist observing a bug; with no more than a naturalist's chance of being able to tell the bug anything new about itself, and no more than a naturalist's chance of being able to teach it any new ways which it will prefer to its own.

To return to that first question. M. Bour-

## WHAT PAUL BOURGET

get, as teacher, would simply be France teaching America. It seemed to me that the outlook was dark ; almost Egyptian, in fact. What would the new teacher, representing France, teach us ? Railroading ? No. France knows nothing valuable about railroading. Steamshipping ? No. France has no superiorities over us in that matter. Steamboating ? No. French steamboating is still of Fulton's date—1809. Postal service ? No. France is a back number there. Telegraphy ? No, we taught her that ourselves. Journalism ? No. Magazining ? No, that is our own specialty. Government ? No ; Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, Nobility, Democracy, Adultery—the system is too variegated for our climate. Religion ? No, not variegated enough for our climate. Morals ? No, we cannot rob the poor to enrich ourselves. Novel-writing ? No. M. Bourget and the others know only one plan, and when that is expurgated there is nothing left of the book.

I wish I could think what he is going to teach us. Can it be Deportment ? But he experimented in that at Newport and failed to give satisfaction, except to a few. Those few

## THINKS OF US

are pleased. They are enjoying their joy as well as they can. They confess their happiness to the interviewer. They feel pretty striped, but they remember with reverent recognition that they had sugar between the cuts. True, sugar with sand in it, but sugar. And true, they had some trouble to tell which was sugar and which was sand, because the sugar itself looked just like the sand, and also had a 'gravelly taste ; still, they know that the sugar was there, and would have been very good sugar indeed if it had been screened. Yes, they are pleased ; not noisily so, but pleased ; invaded, or streaked, as one may say, with little recurrent shivers of joy—subdued joy, so to speak, not the overdone kind. And they commune together, these, and massage each other with comforting sayings, in a sweet spirit of resignation and thankfulness, mixing these elements in the same proportions as the sugar and the sand, as a memorial, and saying, the one to the other and to the interviewer : ' It was severe—yes, it was bitterly severe ; but oh, how true it was ; and it will do us so much good ! '

If it isn't Deportment, what is left ? It was at this point that I seemed to get on the right

## WHAT PAUL BOURGET

track at last. M. Bourget would teach us to know ourselves; that was it: he would reveal us to ourselves. That would be an education. He would explain us to ourselves. Then we should understand ourselves; and after that be able to go on more intelligently.

It seemed a doubtful scheme. He could explain *us* to *himself*—that would be easy. That would be the same as the naturalist explaining the bug to himself. But, to explain the bug to the bug—that is a quite different matter. The bug may not know himself perfectly, but he knows himself better than the naturalist can know him, at any rate.

A foreigner can photograph the exteriors of a nation, but I think that that is as far as he can get. I think that no foreigner can report its interior—its soul, its life, its speech, its thought. I think that a knowledge of these things is acquirable in only one way; not two or four or six—*absorption*; years and years of unconscious absorption; years and years of intercourse with the life concerned; of living it, indeed; sharing personally in its shames and prides, its joys and griefs, its loves and hates, its prosperities and reverses, its shows and

## THINKS OF US

shabbinesses, its deep patriotisms, its whirlwinds of political passion, its adorations—of flag, and heroic dead, and the glory of the national name. Observation? Of what real value is it? One learns peoples through the heart, not the eyes or the intellect.

There is only one expert who is qualified to examine the souls and the life of a people and make a valuable report—the native novelist. This expert is so rare that the most populous country can never have fifteen conspicuously and confessedly competent ones in stock at one time. This native specialist is not qualified to begin work until he has been absorbing during twenty-five years. How much of his competency is derived from conscious 'observation'? The amount is so slight that it counts for next to nothing in the equipment. Almost the whole capital of the novelist is the slow accumulation of *unconscious* observation—absorption. The native expert's intentional observation of manners, speech, character, and ways of life can have value, for the native knows what they mean without having to cipher out the meaning. But I should be astonished to see a foreigner get at the right meanings,

## WHAT PAUL BOURGET

catch the elusive shades of these subtle things. Even the native novelist becomes a foreigner, with a foreigner's limitations, when he steps from the State whose life is familiar to him into a State whose life he has not lived. Bret Harte got his California and his Californians by unconscious absorption, and put both of them into his tales alive. But when he came from the Pacific to the Atlantic and tried to do Newport life from study—conscious observation—his failure was absolutely monumental. Newport is a disastrous place for the unacclimated observer, evidently.

To return to novel-building. Does the native novelist try to generalise the nation? No, he lays plainly before you the ways and speech and life of a few people grouped in a certain place—his own place—and that is one book. In time, he and his brethren will report to you the life and the people of the whole nation—the life of a group in a New England village; in a New York village; in a Texan village; in an Oregon village; in villages in fifty States and Territories; then the farm life in fifty States and Territories; a hundred patches of life and groups of people in a dozen



## THINKS OF US

widely separated cities. And the Indians will be attended to ; and the cowboys ; and the gold and silver miners ; and the negroes ; and the Idiots and Congressmen ; and the Irish, the Germans, the Italians, the Swedes, the French, the Chinamen, the Greasers ; and the Catholics, the Methodists, the Presbyterians, the Congregationalists, the Baptists, the Spiritualists, the Mormons, the Shakers, the Quakers, the Jews, the Campbellites, the infidels, the Christian Scientists, the Mind-Curists, the Faith-Curists, the train-robbers, the White Caps, the Moonshiners. And when a thousand able novels have been written, *there* you have the soul of the people, the life of the people, the speech of the people ; and not anywhere else can these be had. And the shadings of character, manners, feelings, ambitions, will be infinite. M. Bourget thinks ~~the~~ matter is much simpler :

‘ *The nature of a people* is always of a similar shade in its vices and its virtues, in its frivolities and in its labour. *It is this physiognomy which it is necessary to discover*, and every document is good, from the hall of a casino to the church, from the foibles of a fashionable woman to the

## WHAT PAUL BOURGET

suggestions of a revolutionary leader. I am therefore quite sure that this *American soul*, the principal interest and the great object of my voyage, appears behind the records of Newport for those who choose to see it.'—*M. Paul Bourget*.

[The italics are mine.] It is a large contract which he has undertaken. 'Records' is a pretty poor word there, but I think the use of it is due to hasty translation. In the original the word is *fastes*. I think M. Bourget meant to suggest that he expected to find the great 'American soul' secreted behind the *ostentations* of Newport; and that he was going to get it out and examine it, and generalise it, and psychologise it, and make it reveal to him its hidden vast mystery, 'the nature of the people' of the United States of America. We have been accused of being a nation addicted to inventing wild schemes. I trust that we shall be allowed to retire to second place now.

There isn't a single human characteristic that can be safely labelled 'American.' There isn't a single human ambition, or religious trend, or drift of thought, or peculiarity of education, or code of principles, or breed of folly,

## THINKS OF US

or style of conversation, or preference for a particular subject for discussion, or form of legs or trunk or head or face or expression or complexion, or gait, or dress, or manners, or disposition, or any other human detail, inside or outside, that can rationally be generalised as 'American.'

Whenever you have found what seems to be an 'American' peculiarity, you have only to cross a frontier or two, or go down or up in the social scale, and you perceive that it has disappeared. And you can cross the Atlantic and find it again. There may be a Newport religious drift or sporting drift, or conversational style or complexion, or cut of face, but there are entire empires in America, north, south, east, and west, where you could not find your duplicates. It is the same with everything else which one might propose to call 'American.' M. Bourget thinks he has found the American Coquette. If he had really found her he would also have found, I am sure, that she was not new, that she exists in other lands in the same forms, and with the same frivolous heart and the same ways and impulses. I think this because I have seen our coquette; I have seen her in life; better still, I have seen her in our

## WHAT PAUL BOURGET

novels, and seen her twin in foreign novels. I wish M. Bourget had seen ours. He thought he saw her. And so he applied his System to her. She was a Species. So he gathered a number of samples of what seemed to be her, and put them under his glass, and divided them into groups which he calls 'types,' and labelled them in his usual scientific way with 'formulas'—brief, sharp, descriptive flashes, that make a person blink; sometimes, they are so sudden and vivid. As a rule they are pretty far-fetched, but that is not an important matter; they surprise, they compel admiration, and I notice by some of the comments which his efforts have called forth that they deceive the unwary. Here are a few of the coquette variants which he has grouped and labelled :

The Collector.

The Equilibree.

The Professional Beauty.

The Bluffer.

The Girl-Boy.

If he had stopped with describing 'these characters we should have been obliged to believe that they exist ; that they exist, and

## THINKS OF US

that he has seen them and spoken with them. But he did not stop there ; he went further and furnished to us light-throwing samples of their behaviour, and also light-throwing samples of their speeches. He entered those things in his notebook without suspicion, he takes them out and delivers them to the world with a candour and simplicity which show that he believed them genuine. They throw altogether too much light. They reveal to the native the origin of his find. I suppose he knows how he came to make that novel and captivating discovery, by this time. If he does not, any American can tell him—any American to whom he will show his anecdotes. It was 'put up' on him, as we say. It was a jest—to be plain, it was a series of frauds. To my mind it was a poor sort of jest, witless and contemptible. The players of it have their reward, such as it is ; they have exhibited the fact that whatever they may be, they are not ladies. M. Bourget did not discover a type of coquette ; he merely discovered a type of practical joker. One may say *this* type of practical joker, for these people are exactly alike all over the world. Their equipment is always the same : a vulgar mind,

## WHAT PAUL BOURGET

a puerile wit, a cruel disposition as a rule, and always the spirit of treachery.

In his Chapter IV. M. Bourget has two or three columns gravely devoted to the collating and examining and psychologising of these sorry little frauds. One is not moved to laugh. There is nothing funny in the situation ; it is only pathetic. The stranger gave those people his confidence, and they dishonourably treated him in return.

But one must be allowed to suspect that M. Bourget was a little to blame himself. Even a practical joker has some little judgment. He has to exercise some degree of sagacity in selecting his prey, if he would save himself from getting into trouble. In my time I have seldom seen such daring things marketed at any price as these conscienceless folk have worked off at par on this confiding observer. It compels the conviction that there was something about him that bred in those speculators a quite unusual sense of safety, and encouraged them to strain their powers in his behalf. They seem to have satisfied themselves that all he wanted was 'significant' facts, and that he was not accustomed to examine the source whence

## THINKS OF US

they proceeded. It was plain that there was a sort of conspiracy against him almost from the start—a conspiracy to freight him up with all the strange extravagances those people's decayed brains could invent.

The lengths to which they went are next to incredible. They told him things which surely would have excited any one else's suspicion, but they did not excite his. Consider this :

➤ *'There is not in all the United States an entirely nude statue.'*

If an angel should come down and say such a thing about heaven, a reasonably cautious observer would take that angel's number and inquire a little further before he added it to his catch. What does the present observer do? Adds it. Adds it at once. Adds it, and labels it with this innocent comment :

*'This small fact is strangely significant.'*

It does seem to me that this kind of observing is defective.

Here is another curiosity which some liberal person made him a present of. I should think it ought to have disturbed the deep slumber of his suspicion a little, but it didn't. It was a note from a fog-horn for strenuousness, it seems

## WHAT PAUL BOURGET

to me, but the doomed voyager did not catch it. If he had but caught it, it would have saved him from several disasters :

‘ If the American knows that you are travelling to take notes, he is interested in it, and at the same time rejoices in it, as in a tribute.’

Again, this is defective observation. It is human to like to be praised ; one can even notice it in the French. But it is not human to like to be ridiculed, even when it comes in the form of a ‘tribute.’ I think a little psychologising ought to have come in there. Something like this : A dog does not like to be ridiculed, a redskin does not like to be ridiculed, a negro does not like to be ridiculed, a Chinaman does not like to be ridiculed ; let us deduce from these significant facts this formula : the American’s grade being higher than these, and the chain of argument stretching unbroken all the way up to him, there is room for suspicion that the person who said the American likes to be ridiculed, and regards it as a tribute, is not a capable observer.

I feel persuaded that in the matter of psychologising, a professional is too apt to yield to the fascinations of the loftier regions of that



## THINKS OF US

great art, to the neglect of its lowlier walks. Every now and then, at half-hour intervals, M. Bourget collects a hatful of airy inaccuracies and dissolves them in a pailful of assorted abstractions, and runs the charge into a mould and turns you out a compact principle which will explain an American girl, or an American woman, or why new people yearn for old things, or any other impossible riddle which a person wants answered.

It seems to be conceded that there are a few human peculiarities that can be generalised and located here and there in the world and named by the name of the nation where they are found. I wonder what they are. Perhaps one of them is temperament. One speaks of French vivacity and German gravity and English stubbornness. There is no American temperament. The nearest that one can come at it is to say there are two—the composed northern and the impetuous southern ; and both are found in other countries. Morals ? Purity of women may fairly be called universal with us, but that is the case in some other countries. We have no monopoly of it ; it cannot be named American. I think that there is but a single specialty

## WHAT PAUL BOURGET

with us, only one thing that can be called by the wide name 'American.' That is the national devotion to ice-water. All Germans drink beer, but the British nation drinks beer, too; so neither of those peoples is *the* beer-drinking nation. I suppose we do stand alone in having a drink that nobody likes but ourselves. When we have been a month in Europe we lose our craving for it, and we finally tell the hotel folk that they needn't provide it any more. Yet we hardly touch our native shore again, winter or summer, before we are eager for it. The reasons for this state of things have not been psychologised yet. I drop the hint and say no more.

It is my belief that there are some 'national' traits and things scattered about the world that are mere superstitions, frauds that have lived so long that they have the solid look of facts. One of them is the dogma that the French are the only chaste people in the world. Ever since I arrived in France this last time I have been accumulating doubts about that; and before I leave this sunny land again I will gather in a few random statistics and psychologise the plausibilities out of it. If people are

## THINKS OF US

to come over to America and find fault with our girls and our women, and psychologise every little thing they do, and try to teach them how to behave, and how to cultivate themselves up to where one cannot tell them from the French model, I intend to find out whether those missionaries are qualified or not. A nation ought always to examine into this detail before engaging the teacher for good. This last one has let fall a remark which renewed those doubts of mine when I read it :

'In our high Parisian existence, for instance, we find applied to arts and luxury, and to debauchery, all the powers and all the weaknesses of the French soul.'

You see it amounts to a trade with the French soul ; a profession ; a science ; the serious business of life, so to speak, in our high Parisian existence. I do not quite like the look of it. I question if it can be taught with profit in our country, except of course to those pathetic, neglected minds that are waiting there so yearningly for the education which M. Bourget is going to furnish them from the serene summits of our high Parisian life.

I spoke a moment ago of the existence of

## WHAT PAUL BOURGET

some superstitions that have been parading the world as facts this long time. For instance, consider the Dollar. The world seems to think that the love of money is 'American'; and that the mad desire to get suddenly rich is 'American.' I believe that both of these things are merely and broadly human, not American monopolies at all. The love of money is natural to all nations, for money is a good and strong friend. I think that this love has existed everywhere, ever since the Bible<sup>a</sup> called it the root of all evil.

I think that the reason why we Americans seem to be so addicted to trying to get rich suddenly is merely because the *opportunity* to make promising efforts in that direction has offered itself to us with a frequency out of all proportion to the European experience. For eighty years this opportunity has been offering itself in one new town or region after another straight westward, step by step, all the way from the Atlantic coast to the Pacific. When a mechanic could buy ten town lots on tolerably long credit for ten months' savings out of his wages, and reasonably expect to sell them in a couple of years for ten times what he gave

## THINKS OF US

for them, it was human for him to try the venture, and he did it, no matter what his nationality was. He would have done it in Europe or China if he had had the same chance.

In the flush times in the silver regions, a cook or any other humble worker stood a very good chance to get rich out of a trifle of money risked in a stock deal ; and that person promptly took that risk, no matter what his or her nationality might be. I was there and saw it.

But these opportunities have not been plenty in our Southern States ; so there you have a prodigious region where the rush for sudden wealth is almost an unknown thing—and has been, from the beginning.

Europe has offered few opportunities for poor Tom, Dick, and Harry ; but when she has offered one, there has been no noticeable difference between European eagerness and American. England saw this in the wild days of the Railroad King ; France saw it in 1720—time of Law and the Mississippi Bubble. I am sure I have never seen in the gold and silver mines any madness, fury, frenzy to get suddenly rich which was even remotely comparable to that which raged in France in the Bubble day. If

## WHAT PAUL BOURGET

I had a cyclopædia here I could turn to that memorable case, and satisfy nearly anybody that the hunger for the sudden dollar is no more 'American' than it is French. And if I could furnish an American opportunity to staid Germany, I think I could wake her up like a house afire.

But I must return to the Generalisations, Psychologisings, Deductions. When M. Bourget is exploiting these arts, it is then that he is peculiarly and particularly himself. His ways are wholly original when he encounters a trait or a custom which is new to him. Another person would merely examine the find, verify it, estimate its value, and let it go; but that is not sufficient for M. Bourget: he always wants to know *why* that thing exists, he wants to know how it came to happen; and he will not let go of it until he has found out. And in every instance he will find that reason where no one but himself would have thought of looking for it. He does not seem to care for a reason that is not picturesquely located; one might almost say picturesquely and impossibly located.

He found out that in America men do not

## THINKS OF US

try to hunt down young married women. At once, as usual, he wanted to know *why*. Any one could have told him. He could have divined it by the lights thrown by the novels of the country. But no, he preferred to find out for himself. He has a trustfulness as regards men and facts which is fine and unusual ; he is not particular about the source of a fact, he is not particular about the character and standing of the fact itself ; but when it comes to pounding out the reason for the existence of the fact, he will trust no one but himself.

In the present instance here was his fact : American young married women are not pursued by the corrupter ; and here was the question : What is it that protects her ?

It seems quite unlikely that that problem could have offered difficulties to any but a trained philosopher. Nearly any person would have said to M. Bourget : ' Oh, that is very simple. It is very seldom in America that a marriage is made on a commercial basis ; our marriages, from the beginning, have been made for love ; and where love is there is no room for the corrupter.'

Now, it is interesting to see the formidable

## WHAT PAUL BOURGET

way in which M. Bourget went at that poor, humble little thing. He moved upon it in column—three columns—and with artillery.

‘Two reasons of a very different kind explain’—that fact.

And now that I have got so far, I am almost afraid to say what his two reasons are, lest I be charged with inventing them. But I will not retreat now ; I will condense them and print them, giving my word that I am honest, and not trying to deceive any one. ♀

1. Young married women are protected from the approaches of the seducer in New England and vicinity by the diluted remains of a prudence created by a Puritan law of two hundred years ago, which for a while punished adultery with death.

2. And young married women of the other forty or fifty States are protected by laws which afford extraordinary facilities for divorce.

If I have not lost my mind I have accurately conveyed those two Vesuvian irruptions of philosophy. But the reader can consult Chapter IV. of ‘*Outre-Mer*’ and decide for himself. Let us examine this paralysing Deduction or Explanation by the light of a few sane facts.



## THINKS OF US

1. This universality of 'protection' has existed in our country *from the beginning*; before the death penalty existed in New England, and during all the generations that have dragged by since it was annulled.

2. Extraordinary facilities for divorce are of such recent creation that any middle-aged American can remember a time when such things had not yet been thought of.

Let us suppose that the first easy divorce law went into effect forty years ago, and got noised around and fairly started in business thirty-five years ago, when we had, say, 25,000,000 of white population. Let us suppose that among 5,000,000 of them the young married women were 'protected' by the surviving shudder of that ancient Puritan scare—what is M. Bourget going to do about those who lived among the 20,000,000? They were clean in their morals, they were pure, yet there was no easy divorce law to protect them.

Awhile ago I said that M. Bourget's method of truth-seeking—hunting for it in out-of-the-way places—was new; but that was an error. I remember that when Leverrier discovered the Milky Way, he and the other astronomers

## WHAT PAUL BOURGET

began to theorise about it in substantially the same fashion which M. Bourget employs in his reasonings about American social facts and their origin. Leverrier advanced the hypothesis that the Milky Way was caused by gaseous protoplasmic emanations from the field of Waterloo, which, ascending to an altitude determinable by their own specific gravity, became luminous through the development and exposure—by the natural processes of animal decay—of the phosphorus contained in them. •

This theory was warmly complimented by Ptolemy, who, however, after much thought and research, decided that he could not accept it as final. His own theory was that the Milky Way was an emigration of lightning-bugs ; and he supported and re-enforced this theorem by the well-known fact that the locusts do like that in Egypt.

Giordano Bruno also was outspoken in his praises of Leverrier's important contribution to astronomical science, and was at first inclined to regard it as conclusive, but later, conceiving it to be erroneous, he pronounced against it, and advanced the hypothenuse that the Milky Way was a detachment or corps of stars which

## THINKS OF US

became arrested and held in *suspensio suspensorum* by refraction of gravitation while on the march to join their several constellations ; a proposition for which he was afterward burned at the stake in Jacksonville, Illinois.

These were all brilliant and picturesque theories, and each was received with enthusiasm by the scientific world : but when a New England farmer, who was not a thinker, but only a plain sort of person who tried to account for large facts in simple ways, came out with the opinion that the Milky Way was just common, ordinary stars, and was put where it was because God 'wanted to hev it so,' the admirable idea fell perfectly flat.

As a literary artist, M. Bourget is as fresh and striking as he is as a scientific one. He says, 'Above all, I do not believe much in anecdotes.' Why? 'In history they are all false'—a sufficiently broad statement—'in literature all libellous'—also a sufficiently sweeping statement, coming from a critic who notes that we are a people who are peculiarly extravagant in our language—'and when it is a matter of social life, almost all biassed.' It seems to amount to stultification, almost. He

## WHAT PAUL BOURGET

has built two or three breeds of American coquettes out of anecdotes—mainly ‘biased’ ones, I suppose ; and, as they occur ‘in literature,’ furnished by his pen, they must be ‘all libellous.’ Or did he mean not *in* literature but anecdotes *about* literature or literary people ? I am not able to answer that. Perhaps the original would be clearer, but I have only the translation of this instalment by me. I think the remark had an intention ; also that this intention was booked for the trip ; but that either in the hurry of the remark’s departure it got left, or in the confusion of changing cars at the translator’s frontier it got sidetracked.

‘But on the other hand I believe in statistics ; and those on divorces appear to me to be most conclusive.’ And he sets himself the task of explaining—in a couple of columns—the process by which Easy-Divorce conceived, invented, originated, developed, and perfected an empire-embracing condition of sexual purity in the States. *In forty years.* No, he doesn’t state the interval. With all his passion for statistics he forgot to ask how long it took to produce this gigantic miracle.

I have followed his pleasant but devious

## THINKS OF US

trail through those columns, but I was not able to get hold of his argument and find out what it was. I was not even able to find out where it left off. It seemed to gradually dissolve and flow off into other matters. I followed it with interest, for I was anxious to learn how easy-divorce eradicated adultery in America, but I was disappointed. I have no idea, yet, how it did it. I only know it didn't. But that is not valuable ; I knew it before.

Well, humour is the great thing, the saving thing, after all. The minute it crops up, all our hardnesses yield, all our irritations and resentments flit away, and a sunny spirit takes their place. And so, when M. Bourget said that bright thing about our grandfathers, I broke all up. I remember exploding its American counter-mine once, under that grand hero, Napoleon. He was only First Consul then, and I was Consul-General—for the United States, of course ; but we were very intimate, notwithstanding the difference in rank, for I waived that. One day something offered the opening, and he said :

' Well, General, I suppose life can never get entirely dull to an American, because when-

## WHAT PAUL BOURGET

ever he can't strike up any other way to put in his time he can always get away with a few years trying to find out who his grandfather was !'

I fairly shouted, for I had never heard it sound better ; and then I was back at him as quick as a flash—

'Right, your Excellency ! But I reckon a Frenchman's got *his* little stand-by for a dull time, too ; because when all other interests fail he can turn in and see if he can't find out who his father was !'

Well, you should have heard him just whoop, and cackle, and carry on ! He reached up and hit me one on the shoulder, and says—

'Land, but it's good ! It's im-mensely good ! I'George, I never heard it said so good in my life before ! Say it again.'

So I said it again, and he said his again, and I said mine again, and then he did, and then I did, and then he did, and we kept on doing it, and doing it, and I *never* had such a good time, and he said the same. In my opinion there isn't anything that is as killing as one of those dear old ripe pensioners if you

## THINKS OF US

know how to snatch it out in a kind of a fresh sort of original way.

But I wish M. Bourget had read more of our novels before he came. It is the only way to thoroughly understand a people. When I found I was coming to Paris, I read 'La Terre.'





## **A LITTLE NOTE TO M. PAUL BOURGET**



## A LITTLE NOTE TO M. PAUL BOURGET

[The preceding squib was assailed in the *North American Review* in an article entitled 'Mark Twain and Paul Bourget,' by MAX O'RELL. The following little note is a Rejoinder to that article. It is possible that the position assumed here—that M. Bourget dictated the O'Rell article himself—is untenable.]

You have every right, my dear M. Bourget, to retort upon me by dictation, if you prefer that method to writing at me with your pen ; but if I may say it without hurt—and certainly I mean no offence—I believe you would have acquitted yourself better with the pen. With the pen you are at home ; it is your natural weapon ; you use it with grace, eloquence, charm, persuasiveness, when men are to be convinced, and with formidable effect when they have earned a castigation. But I am sure I see signs in the above article that you are either unaccustomed to dictating or are out of practice. If you will re-read it you will notice,

## A LITTLE NOTE TO

yourself, that it lacks definiteness ; that it lacks purpose ; that it lacks coherence ; that it lacks a subject to talk about ; that it is loose and wobbly ; that it wanders around ; that it loses itself early and does not find itself any more. There are some other defects, as you will notice, but I think I have named the main ones. I feel sure that they are all due to your lack of practice in dictating.

Inasmuch as you had not signed it I had the impression at first that you had not dictated it. But only for a moment. Certain quite simple and definite facts reminded me that the article *had* to come from you, for the reason that it could not come from anyone else without a specific invitation from you or from me. I mean, it could not except as an intrusion, a transgression of the law which forbids strangers to mix into a private dispute between friends, unasked.

Those simple and definite facts were these. I had published an article in this magazine, with you for my subject ; just you yourself : I stuck strictly to that one subject, and did not interlard any other. ' No one, of course, could call me to account but you alone, or your

## M. PAUL BOURGET

authorised representative I asked some questions—asked them of myself. I answered them myself. My article was thirteen pages long; and all devoted to you: devoted to you, and divided up in this way: one page of guesses as to what subjects you would instruct us in, as teacher; one page of doubts as to the effectiveness of your method of examining us and our ways; two or three pages of criticism of your method, and of certain results which it furnished you; two or three pages of attempts to show the justness of these same criticisms; half a dozen pages made up of slight fault-findings with certain minor details of your literary workmanship, of extracts from your 'Outre-Mer' and comments upon them; then I closed with an anecdote. I repeat—for certain reasons—that *I closed with an anecdote.*

When I was asked by this magazine if I wished to 'answer' a 'reply' to that article of mine, I said 'yes,' and waited in Paris for the proof-sheets of the 'reply' to come. I already knew, by the cablegram, that the 'reply' would not be signed by you, but upon reflection I knew it would be dictated by you, because no volunteer would feel himself at liberty to

## A LITTLE NOTE TO

assume your championship in a private dispute, unasked, in view of the fact that you are quite well able to take care of your matters of that sort yourself and are not in need of anyone's help. No, a volunteer could not make such a venture. It would be too immodest. Also too gratuitously generous. And a shade too self-sufficient. No, he could not venture it. It would look like too much anxiety to get in at a feast where no plate had been provided for him. In fact, he could not get in at all, except by the back way and with a false key ; that is to say, a pretext—a pretext invented for the occasion by putting into my mouth words which I did not use, and by wresting sayings of mine from their plain and true meaning. Would he resort to methods like those to get in? No ; there are no people of that kind. So then I knew for a certainty that you dictated the Reply yourself. I knew you did it to save yourself manual labour.

And you had the right, as I have already said ; and I am content—perfectly content. Yet it would have been little trouble to you, and a great kindness to me, if you had written your Reply all out with your own capable hand.

## M. PAUL BOURGET

Because then it would have replied—and that is really what a Reply is for. Broadly speaking, its function is to refute—as you will easily concede. That leaves something for the other person to take hold of: he has a chance to reply to the Reply, he has a chance to refute the refutation. This would have happened if you had written it out instead of dictating. Dictating is nearly sure to unconcentrate the dictator's mind when he is out of practice, confuse him, and betray him into using one set of literary rules when he ought to use a quite different set. Often it betrays him into employing the RULES FOR CONVERSATION BETWEEN A SHOUTER AND A DEAF PERSON—as in the present case—when he ought to employ the RULES FOR CONDUCTING DISCUSSION WITH A FAULT-FINDER. The great foundation-rule and basic principle of discussion with a fault-finder is relevancy and concentration upon the subject; whereas the great foundation-rule and basic principle governing conversation between a shouter and a deaf person is irrelevancy and persistent desertion of the topic in hand. If I may be allowed to illustrate by quoting example IV., section 7, from chapter ix., of 'Revised

## A LITTLE NOTE TO

Rules for Conducting Conversation between a Shouter and a Deaf Person,' it will assist us in getting a clear idea of the difference between the two sets of rules :

*Shouter.* Did you say his name is WETHERBY?

*Deaf Person.* Change? Yes, I think it will. Though if it should clear off I——

*Shouter.* It's his NAME I want—his NAME.

*Deaf Person.* Maybe so, maybe so ; but it will only be a shower, I think.

*Shouter.* No, no, *no* !—you have quite misunderstood me. If——

*Deaf Person.* Ah! GOOD-morning ; I am sorry you must go. But call again, and let me continue to be of assistance to you in every way I can.

You see it is a perfect kodak of the article you have dictated. It is really curious and interesting when you come to compare it with yours ; in detail, with my former article to which it is a Reply in your hand. I talk twelve pages about your American instruction projects, and your doubtful scientific system, and your painstaking classification of non-



## M. PAUL BOURGET

existent things, and your diligence and zeal and sincerity, and your disloyal attitude toward anecdotes, and your undue reverence for unsafe statistics and for facts that lack a pedigree ; and you turn around and come back at me with eight pages of weather.

I do not see how a person can act so. It is good of you to repeat, with change of language, in the bulk of your rejoinder, so much of my own article, and adopt my sentiments, and make them over, and put new buttons on ; and I like the compliment, and am frank to say so ; but *agreeing* with a person cripples controversy and ought not to be allowed. It is weather ; and of almost the worst sort. It pleases me greatly to hear you discourse with such approval and expansiveness upon my text :

‘ A foreigner can photograph the exteriors of a nation, but I think that is as far as he can get. I think that no foreigner can report its interior ; ’<sup>1</sup> which is a quite clear way of saying

<sup>1</sup> And you say : ‘ A man of average intelligence, who has passed six months among a people, cannot express opinions that are worth jotting down, but he can form impressions that are worth repeating. For my part, I think that foreigners’ impressions are more interesting than native opinions. After all, such impressions merely mean “ how the country struck the foreigner.” ’

## A LITTLE NOTE TO

that a foreigner's report is only valuable when it restricts itself to *impressions*. It pleases me to have you follow my lead in that glowing way, but it leaves me nothing to combat. You should give me something to deny and refute; I would do as much for you.

It pleases me to have you playfully warn the public against taking one of your books seriously.<sup>1</sup> Because I used to do that cunning thing myself in earlier days. I did it in a prefatory note to a book of mine called 'Tom Sawyer.'

### NOTICE

Persons attempting to find a motive in this narrative will be prosecuted; persons attempting to find a moral in it will be banished; persons attempting to find a plot in it will be shot.

BY ORDER OF THE AUTHOR

PER G. G., CHIEF OF ORDNANCE

The kernel is the same in both prefaces, you see—the public must not take us too seriously. If we remove that kernel we remove the life-principle, and the preface is a

<sup>1</sup> When I published *Jonathan and his Continent*, I wrote, in a preface addressed to Jonathan: 'If ever you should insist in seeing in this little volume a serious study of your country and of your countrymen, I warn you that your world-wide fame for humour will be exploded.'

## M. PAUL BOURGET

corpse. Yes, it pleases me to have you use that idea, for it is a high compliment. But it leaves me nothing to combat; and that is damage to me.

Am I seeming to say that your Reply is not a reply at all, M. Bourget? If so, I must modify that; it is too sweeping. For you have furnished a general answer to my inquiry as to what France—through you—can teach us.<sup>1</sup> It

• <sup>1</sup> 'What could France teach America?' exclaims Mark Twain. France can teach America all the higher pursuits of life, and there is more artistic feeling and refinement in a street of French working men than in many avenues inhabited by American millionaires. She can teach her, not perhaps how to work, but how to rest, how to live, how to be happy. She can teach her that the aim of life is not money-making, but that money-making is only a means to obtain an end. She can teach her that wives are not expensive toys, but useful partners, friends, and confidants, who should always keep men under their wholesome influence by their diplomacy, their tact, their common sense, without bumptiousness. These qualities, added to the highest standard of morality (not angular and morose, but cheerful morality), are conceded to Frenchwomen by whoever knows something of French life outside of the Paris boulevards, and Mark Twain's ill-natured sneer can not even so much as stain them.

I might tell Mark Twain that in France a man who was seen tipsy in his club would immediately see his name cancelled from membership. A man who had settled his fortune on his wife to avoid meeting his creditors would be refused admission into any decent society. Many a Frenchman has blown his brains out rather than declare himself a bankrupt. Now would Mark Twain reply to this: 'An American is not such a fool: when a

## A LITTLE NOTE TO

is a good answer. It relates to manners, customs and morals—three things concerning which we can never have exhaustive and determinate statistics, and so the verdicts delivered upon them must always lack conclusiveness and be subject to revision ; but you have stated the truth, possibly, as nearly as anyone could do it, in the circumstances. But why did you choose a detail of my question which could be answered only with vague hearsay evidence, and go right by one which could have been answered with deadly facts ?—facts in everybody's reach, facts which none can dispute. I asked what France could teach us about government. I laid myself pretty wide open, there ; and I thought I was handsomely generous, too, when I did it. France can teach us how to levy village and city taxes which distribute the burden with a nearer approach to perfect fairness than is the case in any other land ; and she can teach us the wisest and surest system of collecting them that exists. She can teach us how to elect a President in a sane way ; and also how to do

creditor stands in his way he closes his doors, and reopens them the following day. When he has been a bankrupt three times he can retire from business !

## M. PAUL BOURGET

it without throwing the country into earthquakes and convulsions that cripple and embarrass business, stir up party hatred in the hearts of men, and make peaceful people wish the term extended to thirty years. France can teach us—but enough of that part of the question. And what else can France teach us? She can teach us all the fine arts—and does. She throws open her hospitable art academies, and says to us, 'Come'—and we come, troops and troops of our young and gifted; and she sets over us the ablest masters in the world and bearing the greatest names; and she teaches us all that we are capable of learning, and persuades us and encourages us with prizes and honours, much as if we were somehow children of her own; and when this noble education is finished and we are ready to carry it home and spread its gracious ministries abroad over our nation, and we come with homage and gratitude and ask France for the bill—*there is nothing to pay*. And in return for this imperial generosity, what does America do? She charges a duty on French works of art!

I wish I had your end of this dispute; I should have something worth talking about.

## A LITTLE NOTE TO

If you would only furnish me something to argue, something to refute—but you persistently won't. You leave good chances unutilised and spend your strength in proving and establishing unimportant things. For instance, you have proven and established these eight facts here following—a good score as to number, but not worth while :

Mark Twain is—

1. 'Insulting.'
2. (Sarcastically speaking) 'This refined humorist.'
3. Prefers the manure-pile to the violets.
4. Has uttered an 'ill-natured sneer.'
5. Is 'nasty.'
6. Needs a 'lesson in politeness and good manners.'
7. Has published a 'nasty article.'
8. Has made remarks 'unworthy of a gentleman.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'It is more funny than his' (Mark Twain's) 'anecdote, and would have been less insulting.'

A quoted remark of mine 'is a gross insult to a nation' friendly to America.'

'He has read *La Terre*, this refined humorist.'

'When Mark Twain visits a garden . . . he goes in the far-away corner where the soil is prepared.'

## M. PAUL BOURGET

These are all true, but really they are not valuable ; no one cares much for such finds. In our American magazines we recognise this and suppress them. We avoid naming them. American writers never allow themselves to name them. It would look as if they were in a temper, and we hold that exhibitions of temper in public are not good form—except in the very young and inexperienced. And even if we had the disposition to name them, in order to fill up a gap when we were short of ideas and arguments, our magazines would not allow us to do it, because they think that such words sully their pages. This present magazine is particularly strenuous about it. Its note to me announcing the forwarding of your proof-sheets to France, closed thus—for your protection :

*'It is needless to ask you to avoid anything that he might consider as personal.'*

It was well enough, as a measure of pre-

'Mark Twain's ill-natured sneer cannot so much as stain them' (the Frenchwomen).

'When he' (Mark Twain) 'takes his revenge he is unkind, unfair, bitter, nasty.'

'But not even your nasty article on my country, Mark,' etc.

'Mark might certainly have derived from it' (M. Bourget's book) 'a lesson in politeness and good manners.'

(A quoted remark of mine is) 'unworthy of a gentleman.'

## A LITTLE NOTE TO

caution, but really it was not needed. You can trust me implicitly, M. Bourget ; I shall never call you any names in print which I should be ashamed to call you with your unoffending and dearest ones present.

Indeed, we are reserved, and particular in America to a degree which you would consider exaggerated. For instance, we should not write notes like that one of yours to a lady for a small fault—or a large one.<sup>1</sup> We should not think it

<sup>1</sup> When M. Paul Bourget indulges in a little chaffing at the expense of the Americans, 'who can always get away with a few years trying to find out who their grandfathers were,' he merely makes an allusion to an American foible ; but, forsooth, what a kind man, what a humorist Mark Twain is when he retorts by calling France a nation of bastards ! How the Americans of culture and refinement will admire him for thus speaking in their name !

Snobbery. . . . I could give Mark Twain an example of the American specimen. It is a piquant story. I never published it because I feared my readers might think that I was giving them a typical illustration of American character instead of a rare exception.

I was once booked by my manager to give a *causerie* in the drawing-room of a New York millionaire. I accepted with reluctance. I do not like private engagements. At five o'clock on the day the *causerie* was to be given, the lady sent to my manager to say that she would expect me to arrive at nine o'clock and to speak for about an hour. Then she wrote a postscript. Many women are unfortunate there. Their minds are full of after-thoughts, and the most important part of their letters is generally to be found after their signature. This lady's



## M. PAUL BOURGET

kind. No matter how much we might have associated with kings and nobilities, we should not think it right to crush her with it and make her ashamed of her lowlier walk in life ; for we have a saying, ' Who humiliates my mother includes his own.'

Do I seriously imagine you to be the author of that strange letter, M. Bourget ? Indeed I do not. I believe it to have been surreptitiously inserted by your amanuensis when your

P.S. ran thus : ' I suppose he will not expect to be entertained after the lecture.'

I fairly shouted, as Mark Twain would say, and then, indulging myself in a bit of snobbishness, I was back at her as quick as a flash—

' Dear Madam : As a literary man of some reputation, I have many times had the pleasure of being entertained by the members of the old aristocracy of France. I have also many times had the pleasure of being entertained by the members of the old aristocracy of England. If it may interest you, I can even tell you that I have several times had the honour of being entertained by royalty ; but my ambition has never been so wild as to expect that one day I might be entertained by the aristocracy of New York. No, I do not expect to be entertained by you, nor do I want you to expect me to entertain you and your friends to-night, for I decline to keep the engagement.'

Now, I could fill a book on America with reminiscences of this sort, adding a few chapters on bosses and boodlers, on New York's *Chronique scandaleuse*, on the tenement-houses of the large cities, on the gambling-hells of Denver, and the dens of San Francisco, and what not ! But not even your nasty article on my country, Mark, will make me do it.

## A LITTLE NOTE TO

back was turned. I think he did it with a good motive, expecting it to add force and piquancy to your article, but it does not reflect your nature and I know it will grieve you when you see it. I also think he interlarded many other things which you will disapprove of when you see them. I am certain that all the harsh names discharged at me come from him, not you. No doubt you could have proved me entitled to them with as little trouble as it has cost him to do it, but it would have been your disposition to hunt game of a higher quality.

Why, I even doubt if it is you who furnish me all that excellent information about Balzac and those others.<sup>1</sup> All this in simple justice to

<sup>1</sup> 'Now, the style of M. Bourget and many other French writers is apparently a closed letter to Mark Twain ; but let us leave that alone. Has he read Erckmann-Chatrian, Victor Hugo, Lamartine, Edmond About, Cherbuliez, Renan? Has he read Gustave Dror's *Monsieur, Madame et Bébé*, and those books which leave for a long time a perfume about you? Has he read the novels of Alexander Dumas, Eugène Sue, Georges Sand, and Balzac? Has he read Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables* and *Notre Dame de Paris*? Has he read or heard the plays of Sandeau, Augier, Dumas, and Sardou, the works of these Titans of modern literature, whose names will be household words all over the world for hundreds of years to come? He has read *Le Père*—this kind-hearted, refined humanist! When Mark Twain visits a garden does he smell the violets, the roses, the jessamine or the honeysuckle? No,

## M. PAUL BOURGET

you—and to me ; for, to gravely accept those interlardings as yours would be to wrong your head and heart, and at the same time convict myself of being equipped with a vacancy where my penetration ought to be lodged.

And now finally I must uncover the secret pain, the wee sore from which the Reply grew—*the anecdote which closed my recent article*—and consider how it is that this pimple has spread to these cancerous dimensions. If any but you had dictated the Reply, M. Bourget, I would know that that anecdote was twisted around and its intention magnified some hundreds of times, in order that it might be used as a pretext to creep in the back way. But I accuse you of nothing—nothing but error. When you say that I ‘retort by calling France a nation of bastards,’ it is an error. And not a small one, but a large one. I made no such remark, nor anything resembling it. Moreover, the magazine would not have allowed me to use so gross a word as that.

• he goes in the far-away corner where the soil is prepared. Hear what he says : ‘I wish M. Paul Bourget had read more of our novels before he came. It is the only way to thoroughly understand a people. When I found I was coming to Paris I read *Le Terre*.’

## A LITTLE NOTE TO

You told an anecdote. A funny one—I admit that. It hit a foible of our American aristocracy, and it stung me—I admit that; it stung me sharply. It was like this. You found some ancient portraits of French kings in the gallery of one of our aristocracy, and you said :

‘He has the Grand Monarch, but *where is the portrait of his grandfather?*’ That is, the American aristocrat’s grandfather.

Now that hits only a few of us, I grant—just the upper crust only—but it hits exceedingly hard.

I wondered if there was any way of getting back at you. In one of your chapters I found this chance :

‘In our high Parisian existence, for instance, we find applied to arts and luxury, and to debauchery, all the powers and all the weaknesses of the French soul.’

You see? Your ‘higher Parisian’ class—not everybody, not the nation, but only the *top crust* of the nation—*applies to debauchery all the powers of its soul.*

I argued to myself that that energy must produce results. So I built an anecdote out of your remark. In it I make Napoleon Bona-

## M. PAUL BOURGET

parte say to me—but see for yourself the anecdote (ingeniously clipped and curtailed) in paragraph eleven of your Reply.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> So, I repeat, Mark Twain does not like M. Paul Bourget's book. So long as he makes light fun of the great French writer, he is at home, he is pleasant, he is the American humorist we know. When he takes his revenge (and where is the reason for taking a revenge?) he is unkind, unfair, bitter, nasty.

For example :

See his answer to a Frenchman who jokingly remarks to him :

'I suppose life can never get entirely dull to an American, because whenever he can't strike up any other way to put in his time, he can always get away with a few years trying to find out who his grandfather was.'

Hear the answer :

'I reckon a Frenchman's got *his* little standby for a dull time, too ; because when all other interests fail, he can turn in and see if he can't find out who his father was.'

The first remark is a good-humoured bit of chaffing on American snobbery. I may be utterly destitute of humour, but I call the second remark a gratuitous charge of immorality hurled at the Frenchwomen, a remark unworthy of a man who has the ear of the public, unworthy of a gentleman, a gross insult to a nation friendly to America, a nation that helped Mark Twain's ancestors in their struggle for liberty, a nation where to-day it is enough to say that you are American to see every door open wide to you.

If Mark Twain was hard up in search of a French 'chestnut,' I might have told him the following little anecdote. It is more funny than his, and would have been less insulting : 'Two little street boys are abusing each other. 'Ah, hold your tongue,' says one, 'you ain't got no father.'

'Ain't got no father !' replies the other ; 'I've got more fathers than you.'

## A LITTLE NOTE TO

Now then, your anecdote about the grandfathers hurt me. Why? Because it had *point*. It wouldn't have hurt me if it hadn't had point. You wouldn't have wasted space on it if it hadn't had point.

My anecdote has hurt you. Why? Because it had point, I suppose. It wouldn't have hurt you if it hadn't had point. I judged from your remark about the diligence and industry of the high Parisian upper crust that it would have *some* point, but really I had no idea what a gold mine I had struck. I never suspected that the point was going to stick into the entire nation; but of course you know your nation better than I do, and if you think it punctures them all, I have to yield to your judgment. But you are to blame, your own self. Your remark misled me. I supposed the industry was confined to that little un-numerous upper layer.

Well, now that the unfortunate thing has been done, let us do what we can to undo it. There must be a way, M. Bourget, and I am, willing to do anything that will help; for I am as sorry as you can be yourself.

I will tell you what I think will be the very

## M. PAUL BOURGET

thing. We will *swap anecdotes*. I will take your anecdote and you take mine. I will say to the dukes and counts and princes of the ancient nobility of France: 'Ha, ha! You must have a pretty hard time trying to find out who your grandfathers were?'

They will merely smile indifferently and not feel hurt, because they can trace their lineage back through centuries.

And you will hurl mine at every individual in the American nation, saying:

'And *you* must have a pretty hard time trying to find out who your *fathers* were.'

They will merely smile indifferently, and not feel hurt, because they haven't any difficulty in finding their fathers.

Do you get the idea? The whole harm in the anecdotes is in the *point*, you see; and when we swap them around that way, they *haven't* any.

That settles it perfectly and beautifully, and I am glad I thought of it. I am very glad indeed, M. Bourget; for it was just that little wee thing that caused the whole difficulty and made you dictate the Reply, and your amanuensis call me all those hard names which the

## NOTE TO M. PAUL BOURGET

magazines dislike so. And I did it all in fun, too, trying to cap your funny anecdote with another one—on the give-and-take principle, you know—which is American. *I* didn't know that with the French it was all give and no take, and you didn't tell me. But now that I have made everything comfortable again, and fixed both anecdotes so they can never have any point any more, I know you will forgive me.

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